

CLOSE UP

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AS IS

BY THE EDITOR

In this number of *Close Up* are photographs and notes on two films and mention of several others by individual workers : Mr. Florey and Mr Joris Ivens. You will see that Mr Ivens has created a remarkable "absolute" using an Ica Kinamo, and that Mr Florey has made a film, *The Life and Death of 9413* (formerly named the *Hollywood Rhapsody*) which cost him ninety seven dollars (roughly £20) and which has elicited so much interest and discussion that F B O has contracted to release it through the exchanges of that company, and already seven hundred theatres have booked it. European showing has also been arranged.

So you see it *can* be done. Production costs at last becomes a term permitting discussion on reasonable levels. A

short survey of this subject will probably be of interest, as there exists a most extraordinary superstition that film production must run into hundreds if not thousands of pounds. It is important that this idea be done away with if small film producing units are to be formed. The tendency already in this direction is marked, and there are many people sincerely ready to take up film work in this way, but whose attitude is cramped by misunderstanding of costs.

It is not difficult to perceive immediately the disadvantages of pushing up your production costs. It nearly landed Hollywood "in the soup". Of thirty super-productions seven only even paid for themselves over prolonged Broadway showings. The publicity tang of "the film that cost \$ 5,000,000" doesn't even register any more. The new gasp will be "the film that only costs \$ 100".

Firstly the small unit will not have to pay its staff. It will be more or less honorary work all round, with profits put aside for future production, or in some instances, part laid aside and part divided in bonuses. Secondly it will not have to build elaborate exterior sets. Locations that already exist are better, look better, and cost no more than the expense of getting to them. Crowds, I have always found, are very amenable, and only too anxious to help, to stand aside, to wait. And respectful even through what slight friendly heckling may syncopate a kiss-clutch. People will as a rule lend you their windows either gratis or for small coin. A few of the

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company can keep small boys from lining up in front of the camera. Usually it is important to have completely efficient lighting. For miniature sets—such as those used in the in the *Rhapsody of Hollywood*—one or two lamps can yield excellent results. Bruguiere used—I believe—two only in *The Way* and believes that far too many are used normally. Except, however, in specific instances, it is wise to consider lighting as one of the most important matters of technique.

Ultra sensitive stock and 1.8 lenses can be used to a great extent it is true for poorly lighted interiors, and both or either of these is much to be preferred to artificial lighting by a couple of lamps, for in the latter uncouth and misplaced shadow will fall in the oddest places when people begin to move in the set. It does not cost very much however to equip a small studio.

And there again is an important point. Studio implies to most a vast place with endless floor space. A room thirty feet by twenty is quite large enough for usual purposes, unless “dancing” or palatial interiors are desired, and it is to be doubted if the experimentalist will desire these very over-fêted milieux. For such a studio it is as well to have some instrument like the brachyscope, which fits in front of the lens, and magnifies the field two and a half times. For a studio of this description incandescent lighting is warmly to be recommended. This would necessitate the use of panchromatic film, which is a little more expensive, but the advan-

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tages are that besides being "the film of the future", panchromatic lighting is absurdly simple to control. A whole set can be lighted by making a connection—very much like switching on the light when you go into a room. Additionally there is complete absence of flicker. We have all seen the oscillating effect on walls due to arcs, and it is not to be overlooked that arcs are petulant objects needing constant coaxing and attention. Whereas one person can control the lighting of a whole studio equipped with incandescent lamps, a staff of electricians is necessary to look after arcs.

The expensive item is likely to be the camera. True Mr Ivens has made his film on a Kinamo (I don't know the cost in other parts, but here it is less than ten pounds without the clockwork driving attachment and less than eighteen with it). Nearly all producers use some sort of automatic hand camera for some of their shots. The Eyemo (Bell and Howell) is excellent for this purpose. But the disadvantages of these cameras for constant work is that they take only one hundred feet of film at a time, and mixes and fades are impossible. The chemical mix and chemical fade, made in the developing and printing room can sometimes be used, but the process is more difficult for workers along experimental lines, where the full equipment of the professional developing rooms is, even if obtainable, difficult to control from outside. A camera that can fade in and fade out is therefore really necessary, and this device is expensive. Decreasing the exposure and turning faster will give a quite passable fade out, or increasing the

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exposure and turning more and more slowly will give the effect of a white fade out. Or passing a jagged piece of board slowly before the lens can, with care, achieve the desired effect. I might even mention a device I used which worked like a window blind, formed of gauze, first one layer, then two then three, and so on, until the scene was obliterated. Passed immediately in front of the lens the effect was of a thickening mist. One then reversed the process so that the mist cleared on the next sequence. This, obviously, is suitable only for certain effects, and too "stunted" for ordinary use as a fade out. However these instances show how a small camera can be made to perform the functions demanded of a bigger and more expensive one. "Mixes" are ruled out, but "mixes" are not by any means an essential feature of cinematographic art.

One point that might be made for the cheap camera is that it is free from those means whereby one achieves "effects" thus delivering one from temptation.

So then you may pay anything from a thousand pounds for your camera down to ten. Having your camera everything as Pudowkin said, depends on the perspicacity of the director. After initial outlay, your only cost need be for film, for printing and developing, and small incidental expenses, travelling, material for building sets, if necessary, palm-oil, etc. etc.

A full length picture, naturally cannot be made for any-

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thing like £20. Panchromatic stock costs roughly £1 per hundred feet, therefore £10 per reel. Five reels cost £50. This is the cost of your raw stock alone, and makes no allowances for re-shooting, or double shooting. One top of this are cost of positive stock, of developing and printing. And the cost of the Great Unforseen—the most important of all costs, and one which evades the most careful pre-estimate.

Be it noted however that full length films are not advised for the small group. They are harder to sell. A twenty minute or half hour film is far more likely to be crowned with success. Do not even despise the ten minute film. That is about the length of time taken by *La P'tite Lilie*, which some say is Cavalcanti's best.

Mr. Le Neve Forster, of the Manchester Film Society wrote me a letter, parts of which I take the liberty of quoting here.

"As you probably know, efforts are being made in this country to get Amateur Dramatic Clubs and Amateur Photographic Societies to take up amateur film making, which I feel sure you will agree, is all to the good.

"And with reference to these facts perhaps the following incident (which is quite true) will interest you. The Secretary of an Amateur Dramatic Club was asked recently whether his society was going to change over to films in the summer. This was his reply. Well, this filming seems very interesting but of course it is quite impossible for *us* to do it because it costs about £500 to make an amateur film."

"This makes one wonder how many potential amateur film makers are labouring under this absurd delusion as to costs. It will perhaps interest you to learn that the Manchester Film Society's income last year amounted to about thirty five pounds, out of which we ran our winter programme as well as making a short film. And we ended the year with a balance in hand (about £3) ".

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This letter states the case pretty accurately. There are far too many unexploded fallacies still going the round. Five hundred pounds could make a superfilm. That is working on the new principle. Pudowkin has shown us both with *Mother* and *the End of St Petersburg* that the amateur actor can be more realistic than any but the best professional ones, and even as good as these. It will be argued that it takes a Pudowkin to achieve this. But to assume that there are no other geniuses waiting their turn is to deny the very reason for the forming of small film groups. Florey's *Hollywood Rhapsody*, and his *Sad Love of Zero* and his forthcoming *Johann the Coffin Maker*, the first of which has already made a big success, and the latter two stated to be even more striking and likely to win him recognition, have each cost round about one hundred dollars or twenty pounds. Sternberg's remarkable venture *The Salvation Seekers* cost one thousand pounds. I am not aware of the cost of the Man Ray films *Emak Bakia* and *Star of the Sea*, but I am convinced it is very low, probably not much over twenty pounds each picture. The Way and Knight's *Rachmaninov* film, as well as such abstracts as the Ruttman *Operas* or Eggeling's work are among those whose costs are more impressive for their lowness than their bulk. *Prince Achmed* cost far more in energy than £ s d, and in short, twenty people banding together and paying £1 per head can make a film that may set a standard. I won't state what the chances are that they won't succeed, but even if I did they would be poor in spirit if they paid any attention to me.

Small groups will presently band together, embracing also

the small film clubs, discussed most ably in the article by Bryher in this issue. It may as well be recognised that these charming and enthusiastic people have come to stay, and damping facts that aren't facts at all will affect them not one whit. They have realised that there are no facts but the ones you make yourself, and they are busy making them.

KENNETH MACPHERSON.

JEAN HERSHOLT

Motions pictures have caught up with Jean Hersholt. They have been a long time doing it—but all's well that ends well.

To the superficial observer it might appear that this Danish actor has at last made good in Hollywood, after many years of trial and probation. But in truth it is the other way round. It is the movies that have made good in having now recognized and rewarded Hersholt for the great artiste he truly is and always has been.

This is a heartening sign of the times. It demonstrates that the movies are moving—moving forward. They have arrived at the point where real genius, cultured artistry, and dramatic intelligence, versatility and finesse are recognized for what they are, and worthily appreciated ; where these qua-

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lities are differentiated from mere personality or physical attributes and are now cordially acknowledged as essential to the development of the photodrama.

And it is this enlightenment, this sensible advancement, that is now giving rightful rank to Jean Hersolt, along with a few others of his same caste who were at one time either ignored or neglected by Hollywood or unbefittingly appraised—such fellow actors, for example, as H. B. Warner, Emil Jannings, Joseph Schildkraut, Victor Varconi and Clive Brook.

Of all players at present appearing on the screen, Hersolt's cinema record probably runs the farthest back into history. It was nearly a quarter of a century ago—in 1904—that he made his debut before the camera, in the first motion picture produced in his native Denmark. This was many years before the camera had invaded Hollywood—in fact, before Hollywood had even so much as ever seen a motion picture ; for in those early days the now glittering cinema metropolis was but a tiny community of bungalows scattered amid orange and lemon groves and with no prophet in its midst to foresee the time when it would be represented by a large dot on the map of the world.

This initial picture of Hersolt's was sizable enough for its day—two hundred feet. Its novelty compensated for its brevity ; and while it brought Hersolt neither fame nor material gain, it did inspire him with a vision of things to be and a keen professional interest in this new medium of expression.

Circumstances at the time, however offered little or no opportunity for a young man of Hersolt's talents in this primitive

and uncertain field. Accordingly, for the following eleven years he continued with his work on the stage in Copenhagen, but with increasingly numerous excursions into picture studios as the European cinema developed. Then, in 1915, he came to the United States with a company of actors to take part in presentation of the Danish National Play, *Elverhoy*, at the Worlds' Fair in San Francisco.

There he met Thomas Ince, at that time one of the leading Hollywood movie producers. Ince was one of those rare geniuses, of whom Griffith and De Mille are likewise striking examples, who can discern screen personality and ability at first sight and can create outstanding cinema characters from raw material. He was at once impressed with Hersholt's work in the Danish play and induced him to come to Hollywood and cast his lot with the Ince picture company. And from that time, thirteen years ago, Hersholt has been identified with Hollywood pictures.

Besides his varied experience in front of the camera he has had an almost equally varied experience behind it in the rôle of director. For three years he worked with the megaphone for Benjamin Hampton, a producer who specialized in screening the books of popular American novelists, and Hersholt was called upon to exercise his skill in making pictures ranging in subject from the Wild West of Zane Grey to the political satire of William Allen White. And to his particular credit let it be recorded, that each of his pictures proved a box-office success—a truly noteworthy achievement for a foreign director dealing with subjects distinctly and peculiarly American.

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But it is of course as an actor that Hersholt has achieved his real success. Differing from the great majority of screen celebrities, who are distinguished by certain fixed types of characterization in all their work, Hersholt has won recognition by his versatility of characterization. And it might be remarked in passing, that this very versatility has so far barred him from becoming a so-called star. The highest rank yet accorded him in the anomalous peerage of Hollywood, is Leading Man or Featured Player.

However, as many of the best pictures today are no longer built about stars with their standardized rôles, but are being intelligently cast with a view to emphasizing the story rather than some stellar personality, Hersholt's place as the lead in such pictures is equivalent in effect to that of a star, in that it is he who gives them distinction—by his finished impersonations and delightful artistry.

This you will find exemplified in *Abbie's Irish Rose*, *Alias The Deacon*, *The Sacred Hour* (They Knew What They Wanted), *The Old Soak*, and *The Wrong Mr. Wright*, all of them more or less recent productions and in each of which Hersholt plays the chief character. And even in those pictures wherein he appears merely as a supporting character—as in *The Student Prince* (Old Heidelberg), directed by Lubitsch, and with Norma Shearer and Ramon Novarro as stars—his performance is so notably skilful and delectable, that one goes away from the theatre remembering him above all the other persons of the drama.

13 *Washington Square* and *Give and Take* are two of his la-

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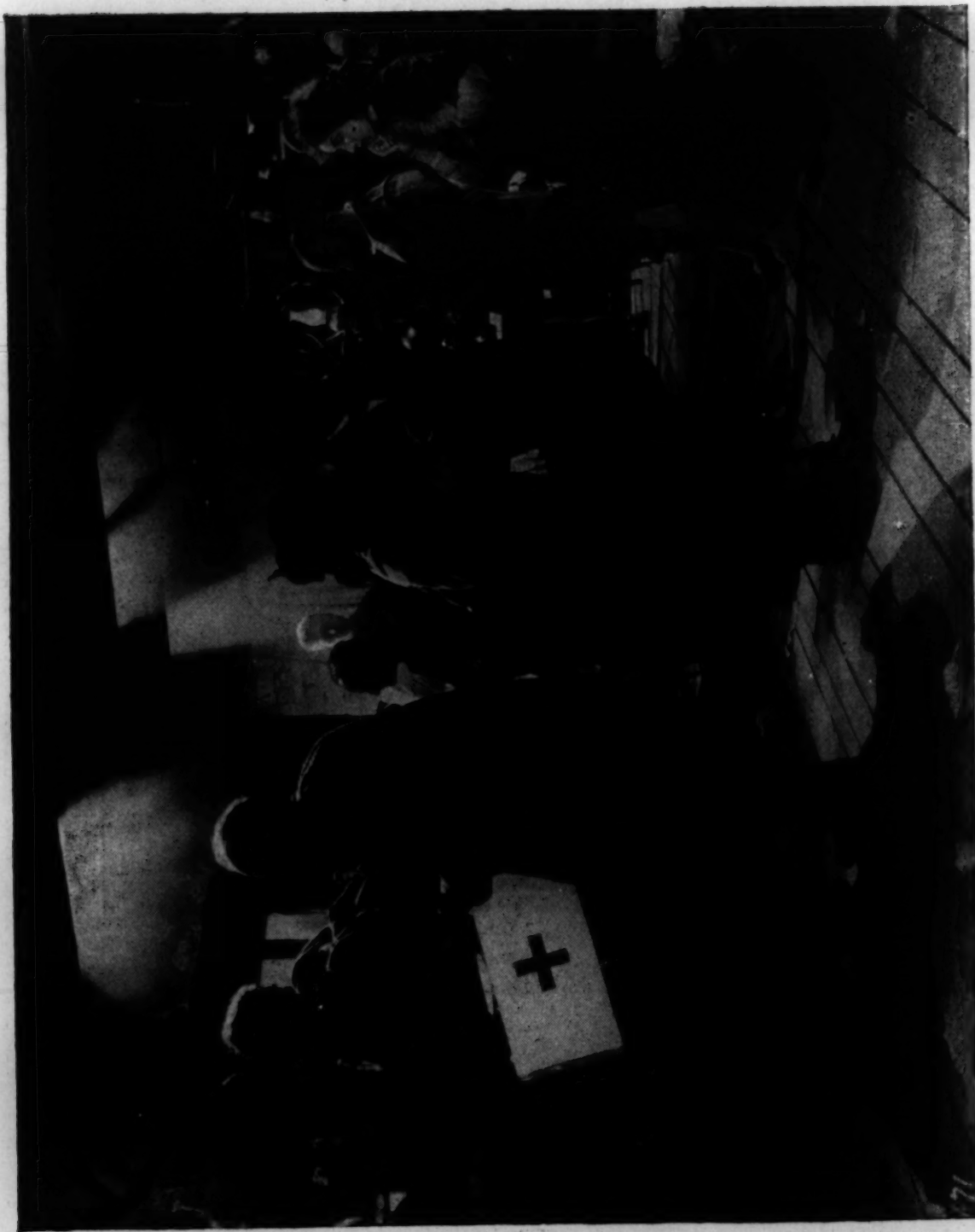
test pictures. These with two or three of the others already mentioned were produced by the Universal Film Company, with whom he is at present under contract—and has been for the past eighteen months or more. It was the first few films in which he appeared under this contract that hastened his popular and commercial recognition. These pictures, because of him, proved unusually successful, and as a result other companies are now eagerly bidding for his services—some of the same companies before whose studio gates a few years back he often knocked in vain as an applicant for work.

Were he of a different stamp he might have been tempted to follow the example of others who have found themselves in a like situation, and manoeuvred thru some legal technicality to break his present contract, in order to accept the offer of a far higher salary from some competing producer. But this is not Jean Hersholt. To him a contract is a contract, in spirit as well as letter.

In view of this honorable attitude, his friends and admirers are volubly outspoken in criticism of the Universal Company for availing itself of its legal right under the contract to loan Hersholt to other companies at a salary in excess of what it is paying him, and pocketing the difference. His contract calls for four pictures a year with Universal. This enables the company to spare him for weeks at a time, to work in the productions of other studios ; and it appears from the records that during the past year the income derived by Universal for his services with other producers has been seven thousand dollars over and above what the company has itself paid him under



The Wedding March. Erich von Stroheim and Zazu Pitts in the former's newest film. Made in one hundred reels, and with the cutting in the hands of persons for whose work von Stroheim will accept no responsibility, it is uncertain whether any of the stills now published will represent scenes in the final production. In any event, they carry their own interest and reveal much of the quality one may hope for.



Admirable depth, life and movement in *The Wedding March*. The hunting expedition in the mountains. Erich von Stroheim with Fay Wray on right. A wonderful suggestion of preparation and mid-day sun.



Erich von Stroheim, star, director and author of *The Wedding March*, a Paramount film, P. A. Powers production.



Fay Wray who plays lead.



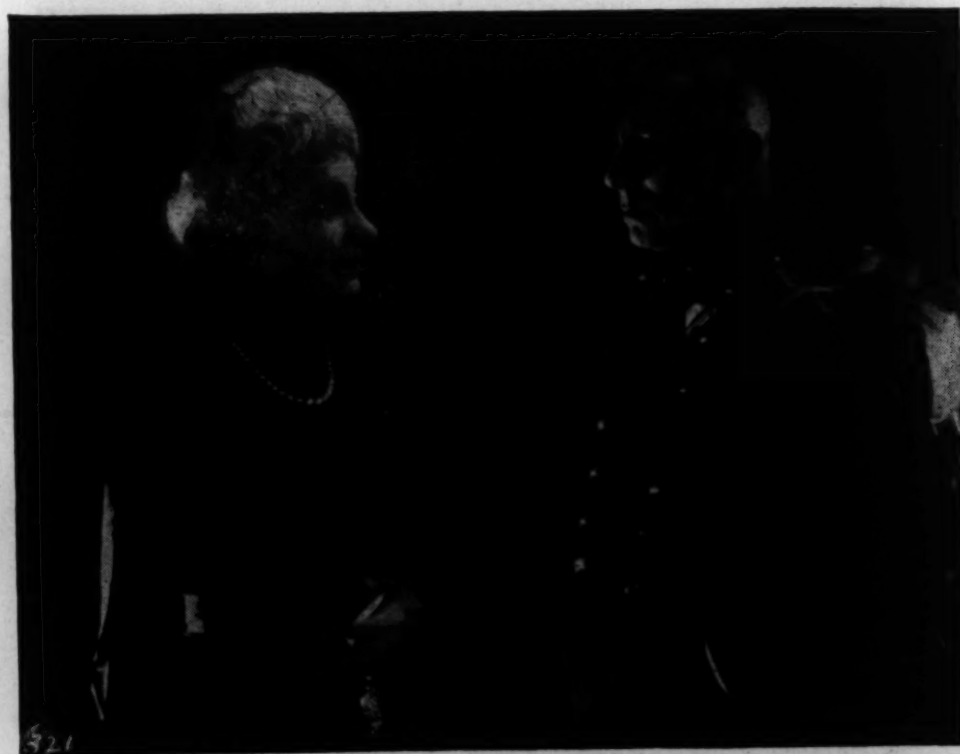
After the departure of Prince Nicki (von Stroheim) on a hunting trip, his bride Cecilia (Zazu Pitts) kneels before a crucifix and receiving a premonition of impending danger, resolves to set out in search of him. The scene is in their Alpine chateau, high in the mountains.



The death of the limping princess von Wildeliebe-Rauffenburg. A tragic end to the hunt. Note the detail and the intensification of atmosphere by the figures in the room behind with the litter of climbing paraphernalia.



Fay Wray, Zazu Pitts and Erich von Stroheim. The cutting of the *Wedding March* is now almost completed. For the public probably a ten reel film. What will become of the remaining ninety?



Prince Nicki, sobered by the death of his wife, is shocked to find his mother (Maude George) takes the situation lightly, and is interested only in its financial aspect.



Spione (The Spy) Fritz Lang's new film, with a scenario by Thea von Harbou, who wrote *Metropolis*, was trade shown in England on May 31st. In treatment it is reminiscent of his earlier *Dr. Mabuse*. Here Fritz Lang (right) is seen instructing Rudolph Klein-Rogge.



A close-up Lupu of Pick and Lien Deyers. The cameraman is Fritz Arno Wagner, who photographed *Jeanne Ney* and *Warning Shadows*. Fritz Lang kneels in the foreground.

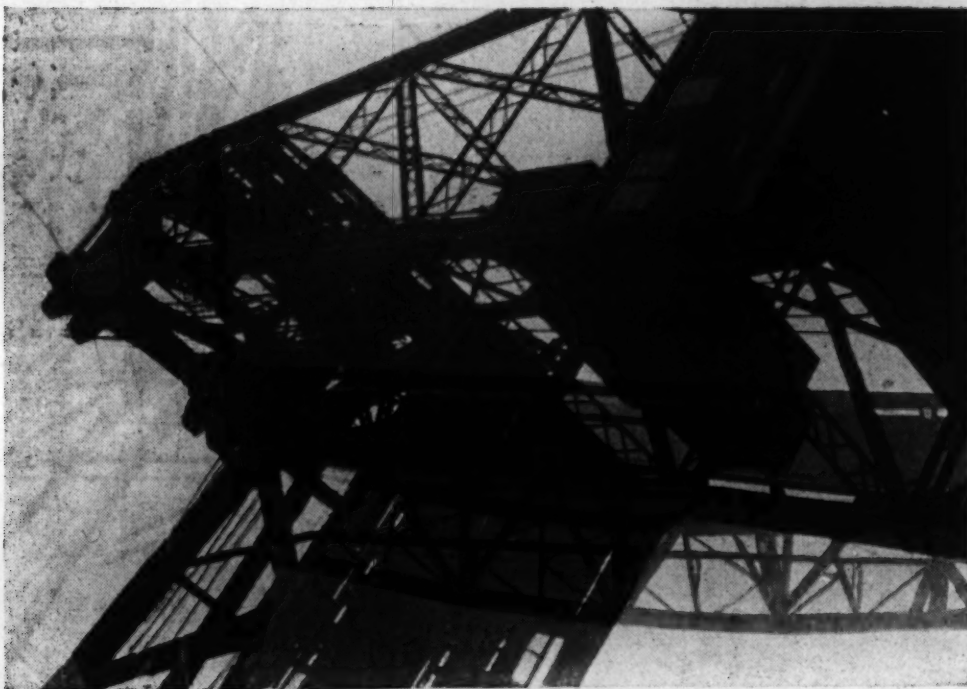


Lien Deyers as Kitty. See comments in *The Spy* elsewhere in this issue. Fritz Lang has already started a new production for Ufa.



Lien Deyers and Lupu Pick. Willy Fritz is also in the cast. This and his previous role in *Schuldig (Guilty)* seem to indicate drama rather than comedy as his future milieu.

Photos : Courtesy of UFA.



The theme of the film is simply concerned with the raising and lowering of a railway bridge near Rotterdam to let the boats past.



From the Dutch film by Joris Ivens. See *Impressions de Belgique* by Jean Lenauer. Made on an Ica Kinamo.

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the terms of his contract. In other words, it has got his services for nothing for four pictures and has secured besides a neat little dividend on the personal popularity created by these pictures.

While this may be typical of Hollywood methods, it must nevertheless be said in defense of Hollywood that there are one or two of the big producers who do not subscribe to this Shylock sort of business, but who turn over without question to any of their loaned players whatever excess salaries may be obtained for them from borrowing companies.

Hersholt himself admits that offers from other producers would give him a hundred thousand dollars greater income during the next twelve months than what he will receive under his contract with Universal. However, he accepts the situation smilingly and philosophically. Fame and the lure of riches have not disturbed his peace of mind nor distorted his vision. True genius has its compensations. Hersholt's joy is in his work, and he finds a fully satisfying gratification in the present opportunity to appear at his best in worthwhile pictures, under the direction of Hollywood's greatest directors and under the auspices of the greatest producers. He is content with his money bargain with Universal, which is by no means insignificant, and if that company in farming him out cares to profit by him financially—why, that's business, and not art. And it is art that alone gives meaning and zest to his life.

The ambition of every Hollywood actor is to appear in a picture by that veteran director and producer, D. W. Grif-

fith. Hersholt has now gained that ambition in full measure. Griffith has chosen him to play the leading character part in his *Battle of the Sexes*, which at this writing is in course of production at the United Artists studio.

CLIFFORD HOWARD.

MOVING ON

I.

THE NEW SCENARIO

After all these years Pabst had to show us what we should have discovered for ourselves at the beginning, but we were dazzled by the Murnaus and the Lupu Picks who were experimenting with overhead cameras and slow emphasis on things. No wonder we were led astray for the idea was so right. Get away from stage sets and use things to establish atmosphere. Yes, but moving shots are so long and if they are dull they remain dull, you cannot cut them. All very well in their place, in character studies, in *The Last Laugh*, when the director wanted you to follow every movement of the old man because he wanted you to know him ; and how could he have better fostered the illusion of intimacy than by keeping you

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continually in the company of Jannings and allowing you to become a little bored with him ?

How long they took to do anything in those early Teutonic dramas. The camera followed the actors upstairs and downstairs, round corners, out into the street. . . .

You see you must not think of three flats and a camera. I agree, but Pabst does it with brisk cutting. That is the art of the screen. The feeling of space and freedom and the interest held.

This means not only a new technique of direction but a new technique of scenario writing. To-day the scenario is but a poor indication of the finished film because it is not split into its proper scenes. A modern scenario contains about four hundred scenes, a totally inadequate number even for the old-fashioned picture. Cross cutting is ignored or else the gentlemen who write the scripts are completely in the dark as to how a film is edited. The scenario of to-morrow will contain every cut. There are, we are told, two thousand cuts in *The Loves of Jeanne Ney*. Very well, the new scenario must have two thousand scenes. It will not be so pleasant to read as the scenario of four hundred scenes, but it will be a scenario.

All this is important because the director must now write his own scenario and cut his own picture. In the past there has been a definite school who held that the director should not cut his own film ; as, quite naturally, he is loth to part with what has cost so much time and care and he leaves the film in an unmanageable length. Look at *Greed* or for that matter almost any Stroheim picture. *Moulin Rouge* lasted

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nearly three hours when it was first presented at the Tivoli. It seems ungracious not to allow a director to show as much of his work as he desires after such travail. The fault lies with the inadequate four hundred scene treatment. The director finds that he cannot "got over" the full import of a situation and devises improvised scenes, but not if the picture is cut in the scenario, and then how much of the picture will be the director's if he does not write the scenario?

The atmosphere conveyed so laboriously by the Lupu Picks is not eliminated by brisk cutting. One has only to mention *The Loves of Jeanne Ney*.

Do you remember how many feet of *New Year's Eve* was taken up by close-ups of clocks? Close-ups of inanimate things are rarely interesting and close-ups of clocks are intolerable.

In *The Postmaster*, Ivan Moskvina plays the part of a minor government official. . . . Ivan is blowing on his tea. See how prim his room is. One aspidistra (or rather its Russian equivalent) on either side of the window. Hullo, Ivan has stopped blowing on his tea. The villain is running off with his beautiful daughter! Ivan's hair goes grey and he grows a beard and moustache. Now there is only one aspidistra. . . .

Excuse this digression. What I wanted to show was that atmosphere can be conveyed by "things" in the background without bringing them into close-up. The bottom had fallen out of the old man's life, and the broken symmetry of the aspidistras. Lupu Pick might have rhythmically approached the aspidistras from different angles on a trolley, and

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then shown the broken fragments of the fallen pot covered with cobwebs. Some hundred feet of aspidistras ! How many films could be reduced to reasonable proportions if scenes —as unnecessary if hardly as obviously so—were deleted ? How ridiculous to see a carriage draw up outside a door, or somebody step out of a train, how boring to know just how everybody “gets there” ! Every visitor is not greeted, in real life, with “Tell me at once my dear, did you come by bus, taxi, tube or private car ?” Yet film directors imagine that the public has an unquenchable curiosity in this direction. By the way *I would* like to know how Moskvina in *The Postmaster* ever got to the city with that feeble totter.

I cannot make up my mind what position the mix will occupy in the new scenario. I am certain of one thing that the mix will not be made on the camera. In England where films are turned out to the measurements of Wardour Street, mixes are scarcely ever made in the dark room. Like the moving shot, a series of mixes made on the camera cannot be cut, therefore it must go. Mixes, if they are to stay, must be “chemical mixes”, that is mixes made with chemical fades in the printer. In Germany the “chemical mix” is largely employed, but for the less praiseworthy motives. The German director likes to alter, regroup and add to his mixes.

I realise that I have given the impression that I am very bitter about moving shots and mixes, and it is because so many people are still being deceived by them. Some of the critics have treated *The Last Command* as if it was “the Last Word”, but the technique is really anything but modern.

The story is told by the sub-titles 'GENERAL D. LOVES RUSSIA'. A close-up of General D. loving Russia. In the old days it was : 'AND THE ROSEATE FINGERS OF DAWN WERE BRUSHED ACROSS THE SKY.' A long shot of the roseate fingers doing their stuff. Having set the table with sub-titles anyone can show a long string of mixes revealing anxious gentlemen fingering glasses and nervous ladies tearing up handkerchiefs. Pabst and Sternberg—compare the two!

II.

WHERE ARE THE OTHERS GOING?

It has been said and said and said that Pabst has shown the way. Foolish optimism to hope that others will follow willingly, will be grateful to understand. No, they will go on developing along their own lines. Nevertheless we must go on saying and saying because development in that direction is frightening. Just when they turn round and tell us, "All this is too tiresome," we can answer: "But we have been saying and saying and saying."

Dupont was justified. A circus did look interesting and unusual upside down. Sometimes it may be stimulating to show scenes from the view point of one of the characters, but the others want so much more. The camera must be a spectator, an eye. They hope to get deeper and deeper into the

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inner lives of the characters through dogging their footsteps, through spying on them, living with them, all through the camera. As I said before something may be found but at the expense of boredom, and Pabst loses nothing and keeps our interest.

Where are they going ?

Those moving shots that are the backbone of their method, will develop from a smooth follow on a trolley into a faint jog. In other words the camera will acquire a walk, a distinctive gait. If the camera is to be a spectator it must come off its trolley and run and walk. When the pursuit becomes difficult and the road rough it might trip over. Why not ?

Further development becomes still more fantastical. Perhaps some courageous amateur might care to make a little film extravaganza based on this principle which I offer him freely. Certainly it might make rather an interesting high-brow film for the next step is for the camera to clothe itself with sinews and flesh. Again why not ? If the camera is to be an eye it should have a body. "What strange blood would run in its veins ?" you ask ; but quite easily the effect could be suggested, there is no need to imagine a weird robot stalking round the studio. An extra could sit between the legs of the camera, and every now and then raise a cigarette in front of the lens, just as if it was being placed in the mouth, to be followed by the inevitable puff of smoke. The camera could yawn, turn its back on the scene, or saunter about (another easy effect suggested by a hand camera). For variety the camera might look down at its legs to see if the crease was

nicely preserved in the trousers, or stoop to do up a bootlace. Again being a spectator and acquiring a body the camera would incur obligations. I look forward to the day when an infuriated camera will dash into the scene and rescue the heroine from the villain's evil clutches.

What will the public say of a jiggling camera whose hands obscure the picture at the critical moments and who gets mixed up with the actors? The most joyous thought of the whole business, the rout of the great G. P.

Enough of this facetiousness, but don't we come back to the fact that the cut is the natural means of expression in the medium of the film? So that I do not disapprove of moving shots which are introduced with some purpose and not merely to save a cut, what I object to is this endless following from one room to another. Neither can I object to shots taken on a gyroscopic tripod, for does not Pabst employ them in *The Loves of Jeanne Ney*, and is not Pabst my creed? Parenthetically have you noticed how often cameramen use vignettes for such shots, and the vignette seems to stand still while the picture moves?

In conclusion, how are film producing centres going to be influenced by modern developments epitomized in Pabst? America has already discovered the value of brisk cutting for brightening a poor story, but approaches more serious efforts with reverential pace. Russia will completely ignore anything that might lighten the unhappy task of the English editor of a Russian film. Germany is the battleground of both parties. While England is going to get into a mess. Quick

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cutting means thoughtful continuity, and English continuity is slovenly to say the least. An artist told me a typical tale of costly oversights. The first day's take on the » Aquitania« set, for *Champagne* was spoilt because the wind was forgotten. It was supplied on the second day by an aeroplane propellor, but nobody remembered to soak the rope-ladder presumably drawn up over the side of the ship. Three days' work for avoidable slips. Godfrey Winn in *Blighty* goes upstairs to his bedroom and night changes to day, unless it was a terrifically violent moon that night.

A certain British studio solved the continuity question a few years ago in rather a novel manner. In between productions the director posed his star in front of a black background for every emotion in the spectrum of the commercial scenario. He would take hundreds of feet of close-ups and keep it in stock. Then when the continuity failed, when the heroine left a room carrying an umbrella and emerged to the street with a walking stick, the wily director would divert the attention of the public by cutting in a close-up. The reels would be lifted down from the shelf and an appropriate close-up selected. She is laughing in the long shot, then here is a smiling close-up !

Yes, for quite a long time we must go on saying and saying.

OSWELL BLAKESTON.

IMPRESSIONS DE BELGIQUE ET HOLLANDE

Anvers est un centre actif d'exploitation cinématographique, mais, hélas, on n'y tourne aucun film et, constatation affligeante s'il en est, le cinéma se borne là-bas à son rôle ordinaire de divertissement et ne s'embarrasse pas d'éclectisme. La presse qui s'intéresse aux films ne leur accorde encore qu'une importance secondaire et la critique est exercée, soit par des services d'information ou par des journalistes, comme branche auxiliaire, tout simplement. Il n'y existe aucune association de cinéphiles, ni aucun établissement projetant des bandes « non commerciales » ; tout ce qui passe sur les écrans de l'endroit n'est que de la grosse production moyenne de valeur uniforme.

Par contre, il en est autrement en Hollande.

On ne peut dire que ce dernier pays fournisse réellement une production de films, mais on y constate un intérêt réel et profond pour l'art muet. Toutes les questions ayant trait au domaine du film y font l'objet d'une sérieuse attention. C'est ainsi que la cité de Haag abrite actuellement une vaste exposition internationale du cinéma. Cette exposition, où je me suis rendu le jour d'ouverture (alors qu'on y attendait encore

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de nombreuses contributions) m'est apparue tout à fait intéressante.

On s'y préoccupe tout d'abord des questions artistiques, mais aussi de créer, si possible, de nouveaux débouchés aux films.

Du 22 au 25 avril, un Congrès catholique du cinéma y tiendra séance et l'on prévoit également que deux conférences de l'Association de l'Enseignement par le film auront lieu à Haag, du 1^{er} au 4 mai. Les membres de cette association y discuteront divers projets de culture et d'enseignement cinématographique, de célèbres vedettes de l'écran sont invitées, l'on y pourra voir de même la récente invention (allemande) de Heinrich Kuechenmeister, réalisant le film parlé. En parcourant l'exposition on est frappé par la recherche d'idées et de procédés nouveaux et originaux qui se révèle un peu partout.

On remarquera aussi que l'affiche officielle est illustrée d'un passage du film *En Rade* de Cavalcanti. En outre, un choix très riche de photographies tirées des meilleures bandes de production russe, ainsi que de maquettes des films français et allemands les plus intéressants nous prouve que tout est bien inspiré ici d'un goût très sûr.

Les dernières inventions techniques dans le domaine des appareils, de l'éclairage et de l'accompagnement musical, font l'objet d'une exposition très réussie. (On y remarque entr'autres de nombreux gramophones et orgues reproduisant tous les bruits imaginables, donnant ainsi à la musique du film une orientation nouvelle, plus mécanique, tendant

à ce qui me semble, à supplanter l'orchestre d'aujourd'hui.) Le cadre même dans lequel est situé l'exposition souligne heureusement son essence moderne. *Close Up* est la seule revue de cinéma qui soit en montre à Haag.

Mais l'exposition de Haag ne saurait pourtant justifier à elle seule l'opinion satisfaisante que nous avons exprimée au sujet de la vie du cinéma en Hollande. Il y a plus encore. Une « Ligue du Film » existe dans ce pays.

Cette Ligue qui a son siège à Amsterdam, fût fondée en septembre 1927, par quelques jeunes cinéphiles ; elle a pour but de lutter pratiquement contre la médiocrité du film ordinaire, de la production dite normale et de se mettre à l'abri des préjugés qui consistent, de la part des directeurs de salles, à ne louer que des films à succès, des films commerciaux. (Je n'insisterai pas sur cette fâcheuse constatation, dont la vérité est, hélas, trop connue).

La censure avait interdit la projection, en Hollande, du film "*Mutter*" de Pudowkin ; or, cette mesure eût pour heureux effet de rapprocher les cinéphiles qui fondèrent alors la « Ligue du Film ». Celle-ci compte actuellement 1.500 sociétaires-abonnés à Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Haag, Delft et Groeningen, acquittant une cotisation annuelle de 8 florins hollandais qui leur donne droit d'entrée à 12 représentations privées.

La preuve la meilleure, à mon sens, que ce club puisse fournir de son activité artistique est encore le choix intelligent des films auxquels il accorda son attention jusqu'ici et que, sans sa courageuse initiative, aucun public hollandais n'eût

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jamais eu le privilège de voir. Ces films sont : les œuvres de Cavalcanti : *Rien que les Heures*, *La petite Lilie*, *Yvette*, des fragments du *Train sans Yeux* (donnés dans une séance de gala que Cavalcanti lui-même honora de sa présence), *Entr'acte*, de René Clair, *Emak Bakia*, de Man Ray, *Faits Divers*, de Claude Autant Lara, *Berlin*, de Walther Ruttmann, un film absolu de Richter et un autre du Suédois Eggeling, *Jazz*, de James Cruze, *Nosferatu*, de Murnau, *Streik* (Grève) de Eisenstein, et enfin le film *Mutter* de Pudowkin, déjà mentionné. On peut voir par là que les programmes sont toujours intéressants et ne comportent que des bandes de réelle valeur dont le choix n'est limité par aucune fausse tendance.

La « Ligue du Film », qui possède un bureau central à Paris, est maintenue par son intermédiaire en contact étroit avec les associations analogues de l'étranger et les Régisseurs modernes, pour acquérir si possible un caractère d'internationalité qui facilite d'autre part grandement la tâche aux régisseurs et leur offre des garanties financières et des relations qui leur permettent de se consacrer avec plus de liberté au perfectionnement constant du film. Les régisseurs du monde entier seraient bien inspirés en s'intéressant à cette association de cinéphiles, qui ne peut que leur être utile.

J'eus également l'occasion de voir un film hollandais tourné à temps perdu par un membre de la Ligue, Joris Ivens, au moyen d'un appareil automatique : *Kinamo*.

Évidemment, les difficultés qu'ont à surmonter les régisseurs disposant de moyens réduits ne retiennent guère l'attention du public, et si je parle de ce film c'est uniquement pour en

féliciter l'auteur qui a réellement obtenu une bande très originale.

Le thème du film de Joris Ivens n'est autre qu'un pont de chemin de fer, aux environs de Rotterdam, qui s'élève de temps à autre pour permettre aux bateaux de continuer leur traversée.

En réalité, c'est une pure symphonie visuelle, réalisée avec une technique supérieure et une sûreté étonnante. On se sent autorisé en voyant cette rare beauté de composition, à lui décerner l'épithète la plus flatteuse. Elle nous révèle le talent nouveau de Joris Ivens qui ne s'aide d'aucun truc, ni subterfuge, et dont nous pouvons attendre certainement, dans un avenir prochain, des jouissances visuelles insoupçonnées.

En quittant la Hollande, ce pays moderne à tous les points de vue, pour rentrer à Paris, je songe avec joie à l'avancement progressif et irrésistible du véritable film artistique, qui gagnera tôt ou tard le monde tout entier.

JEAN LENAUER.

HOW I WOULD START A FILM CLUB

A film club will be of no real service to cinematography unless based upon the following principles.

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No censorship.

Films to be shown in the original version as cut by their directors.

Two thirds of the films shown each season should be new, for six months in the cinema may mean revolution of lighting or photographic method.

Abroad it is usually easy to hire a local cinema cheaply at a convenient time but this is difficult in England for the following reasons : a Film Club will be obliged to arrange its meetings chiefly in the evenings or on Sundays. Evenings are out of the question as the local cinema will have its ordinary programme. Most country cinemas have no Sunday license. And I must confess that to date I have been able to obtain no reliable information as to exactly how the censorship rules apply to private film shows. Many of the films shown at the London Film society are cut. Whether this has been done at the request of members or of the L.C.G. I do not know. But to avoid all risks it will probably be better for English Film clubs to buy their own projectors.

It is possible that there are films which it may be unwise to show a general audience, though it is doubtful whether any film can do the harm that people say, but still it is reasonable to bar certain films from universal showing. But if an adult is not intelligent enough to see *Potemkin*, *La Tragédie de la Rue*, or *The End of St Petersburg*, in their original uncut form, then he is not intelligent enough to be on a film society. His want can be catered to by any cinema showing the ordinary Hollywood films. Therefore the first essential of a film club is *no censorship*.

It is possible to buy a good projector in France for thirty

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pounds and one that will give results equal to any in a small local cinema for sixty. The prices may be higher in England on account of the duty. Or there may be English projectors on the market that will give satisfactory results. But as I have had no personal experience of them (whereas I have seen the French ones used constantly), I will not attempt to deal with the English makes.

From thirty to sixty pounds is a large item at the start though it would probably be cheaper spread across several seasons, than hiring the local picture house. It is hard to say what the electrical cost would be in England. Here in Switzerland, it works out at about sixpence to a shilling for an evening. Probably an arrangement could be made in England to have the projector working "on power" in the same way that an electrical fire or cleaner is worked. And this is a much cheaper rate than lighting.

There is another point. The Ursulines advertises that it will send out a man, projector and film to any house on payment of costs and a moderate fee. It might be worth while for several small Film Clubs in the same district to unite and buy one projector and employ one man, between them.

Then with regard to choice of films. The Ursulines have arranged to send their programme to Belgium and Switzerland as well as to towns in France. By this means small Film Clubs can afford to see *new* films. Naturally it costs more to hire a new film than an old one but if a central cinema can take it for an initial run and then pass it on to a number of smaller clubs the expense being divided among so many will

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amount to the same as if each one had hired separately some old films. By this means in time a circle of small cinemas will evolve which will guarantee a showing to new intelligent films, with fair profit on both sides. But for the moment practically the only way in which a good programme will be financially possible will be some sort of amalgamation of clubs who will share together the expense of one *complete and good programme*.

Of course there are a number of foreign films in London that were excellent in their original form. But the foreign trade papers quite cynically print warnings that in England only a "happy ending" is possible and the versions sent to Wadour Street usually arrive with their continuity destroyed. One good point made by the French quota was that films must be submitted in the form shown in the country of their origin. It is a pity that this rule is not enforced in London for friends who have seen both English and German versions tell me that *Jeanne Ney* and *Am Rande der Welt* have been cut so badly that continuity and balance are broken. And it is useless stating that a film is of value to students of cinematography *and then showing it in a mutilated form*. Therefore the ideal must be direct importation from abroad.

But where in this discussion, is the place of English films? Are there no English films to fill the programme? I do not think there are. Not to come up to the standard of Pabst, Pudowkin, Bruno Rahn, Czinner and half a dozen others. And if we are to evolve standards of criticism in England and the capacity to make films as great, we have got to see the *best*. And the best at the moment means foreign films.

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But then, someone will say, is there not a danger that the film club will become as exclusively foreign as, it was alleged the commercial world was exclusively Hollywood? If it did for a few years it would not matter. Directly the English make similarly good films, these will get shown. (At present it would probably mean that if someone did make a true and psychological film, in England, the only chance for that film would be to show it abroad.) As matters stand it is doubtful if anyone compelled to remain in England can more than surmise and grope after the real developments of modern cinematography. *Mother*, *Potemkin*, *The End of St Petersburg*, *Bett und sofa*, *Tragedie de la Rue*, and others as great have never been shown publicly in England. *Joyless Street* and *Nju* were shown by the Film Society for one performance, *Joyless Street* in a mutilated form. *Jeanne Ney* and the *Violinist of Florence* to choose at random have been horribly cut. In Paris, in Berlin, in even the smaller towns in Switzerland it is possible to see a programme almost weekly including such a film. IN ENGLAND THEY ARE NEVER SEEN AT ALL. Yet until we know what cinematography has already achieved how can we hope to evolve standards of comparison and criticism?

I have noticed in connection with this point that several educated English people who go occasionally to the cinema come abroad and are frankly baffled by such a film say as *Mother* or *Sühne*. But the people here as they sell one potatoes or newspapers will quite often discuss the same film quite intelligently. They have been trained by several years of good among bad films (for there are bad films shown here as

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well as elsewhere). But frequently the English are so accustomed to a Western or to sob-stuff that directly they are faced with straight psychology they are uncomfortable. The same applies to America.

It is the duty therefore of the small Film Clubs to build up an audience of intelligent spectators. And here for a start are a few suggestions.

1. Collect as many people as possible who will be intelligently interested but don't for the sake of numbers include those whose presence will prevent the showing of films not in accordance with *their* convention of morality.

2. Decide upon the relative advantages and disadvantages of buying a projector or hiring the local cinema.

3. Take in a trade paper from England, France and Germany and borrow a corner of a room from some member where it may be read. It is valuable to have a trade paper for the following reasons. It will give the commercial viewpoint in the terms of "tie-ups" with groceries zoos, aeroplanes, silk stockings, and other commodities. It lists films to be trade shown or released so that people will know what films to look for or demand. It will often include a good technical article on photography, projection etc. Their reviews of films are based naturally on whether the said films are suitable for "family halls", "safe booking for sophisticated patrons", "useful booking for uncritical patrons" or "sound entertainment on popular lines". But this straight negation of all artistic merit is perhaps preterable to the half hearted literary criticisms one too often reads which try to fit films into outworn dramatic formulas with which cinematography has no concern.

4. Keep the costs as low as possible as the people who are usually interested in films are young and have little spare money.

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5. Get in touch with Film Clubs abroad who will help you to keep up to date with programmes and with other small Film Clubs in England with a view to co-operation. Providing space permits, *Close Up* will be pleased to print names and addresses of any Film Clubs formed.

In time perhaps some kind of central distributing trade show might be arranged for film clubs only. In France there is said to be an excellent system applicable to all films. Copies of a foreign film are sent "en douane". That is they are kept at a customs depot provided with projection room. Prospective buyers may view the films there and if they like them, the duty is paid and until the establishment of the quota, the films were allowed to enter. If on the other hand they have not been bought within a reasonable time they are returned to their owners in their country of origin with no duty other than a small fee. Some such system should be arranged in England so that the best foreign films could be seen by representatives of Film Clubs who might buy copies for private showing.

BRYHER.

PUBLICITY

There is the thing business, and the thing advertising, and the one grows out of the other, and that is all right. But then there is a thing publicity which is neither of these, but a para-

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site, a funny kind of growth. A misletoe which grows on and over the perfectly good, legitimate sign you have put out to advertise your goods. It hides both the sign and the goods, till in time these are noticed chiefly in proportion to the amount of misteletoe that can be fostered over them. We are started now, you know what I am at, so here are some instances.

When *Sunrise* was trade-shown in London, professional critics were invited to a handsome lunch (hors d'œuvres and all) so that they might enjoy it the more. And if their duties prevented them from answering the kind invitation more than once, they were Got At. By the publicity department. A telegram was sent out.

The same firm gave another lunch to attract one to *Four Sons*, and having made one look forward to the event (that was their idea) because of the lunch, they gave one, in the theatre, a two-shilling copy of the waltz, so that one could look forward to the event being over, when one could play *Little Mother* in what privacy the weekly news sheets, telegrams and aids to ads. leave one of one's home. But the gentleman who made the speech at the lunch forgot the name of the star, and raved instead of a Mary Mann because that was publicity.

Another firm sent me "chatty pars" about an actress who had arrived in London. Reading them in my zeal, I discovered that I had been sent a ready-made interview. "Speaking in a crisp, well-modulated voice, Miss X. told the representative of *Close Up* that she would not advise girls to go on the screen. 'Although my own rise has been rapid' she said. . . ."

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Here it was, all ready-made. Only it was not the actress' name that was blank, but that of the paper. The hard-worked journalist just filled in the name of his paper, and there it was. The hungry public had an interview with their star. The personal touch was given, and the journalist need no longer see the actress, the actress need no longer receive the journalist in a room set apart for the purpose, but disguised as the inmost sanctum ("And is THIS where you wear your tiara, Miss Negri?"). It is all done ready for them, sent out with the weekly news sheet. Janet Gaynor is a charming actress. She can do, or be made to do, good things with intrinsically bad stuff, and I have said so. But I was extremely surprised to receive last week a large, personally signed photograph of Janet Gaynor. In the size and style known as a Camera Study. I looked at the cover. It was emblazoned in red letters "The Silent Bernhardt". Publicity, with which I do not expect the Gaynor had much to do, beyond signing according to the list sent to her. But there you have it. Bernhardt was famed for her golden voice, the screen is silent. What can a Bernhardt without a voice be supposed to be? What is this publicity which does this, works in this way? What does it do? It is not good advertising, not good business. It is simply a bad habit, grown up out of the exuberance of a class whose means are beyond their need. I bear no malice, or very little. It is not only that I am sick of Dorothy Sebastian in shopping ensembles, of "Buddy" spending a well-dressed day, of hearing what Joby said to Murnau on the telephone. I am so sick that I want the cure, and since it is easier to cure

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a bad habit by altering than dropping it, I am kind enough to make a few suggestions to the various gentlemen who spend so much time thinking of these curious things. It is too easy to make fun of Dorothy Sebastian, one does not want to knock her off the double pages. One wants to put something there instead, that will do better what she overdoes. That is, to interest.

We, you, they, whoever it is that is reached by this stuff, should have attention drawn, not diverted. That is the first rule. So in the film magazines, whose contributors seem mainly, if anonymously, the publicity departments, the chief features should be reviews of FILMS, photographs (there are not nearly enough) of SCENES, and DETAILED INFORMATION. And this examination should be from other than the showman's point of view. In [England, *Cinema*, *The Kinematograph Weekly*, *The Bioscope* do, it is true, give a fair amount of space to films themselves, but it is all from this point of view. Whether they are acceptable for family halls, how much star value they have. It is clearly letting the filmgoer into too many secrets, and so bad business, if he is driven to these trade papers for information. But the only English paper for him limits its reviews of films to a few pages at the end, giving casts and some rough label, such as "another German melodrama", which may, as it is meant, mean anything. The rest of the seventy-four pages is taken up with gossip, articles on the momentary colour of Clara Bow's hair and what Swanson thinks of Haver.

This is the first thing. There is not enough attention drawn

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to the Film as wholes, as the things we are interested. The next is that it is exceedingly difficult to find out when any certain picture is to be shown. Firms will send out sheets and sheets of gossip, but only a few of them throw in the release dates of their pictures, and the fact that a picture is released does not mean that it will be shown. And no one knows where. Also, of course, these news sheets are not available to the general public. One or two of the larger London cinemas publish a monthly list of their bookings. But they do not often say at what time they will be shown, nor are the larger cinemas invariably the most interesting. *The Times* used to publish a list of London cinemas which was fairly full and most useful, but for some reason they have stopped this. *The Evening News* and a few others publish slightly longer lists than those now given in *the Times*, but these do not give the movies of North London, of Chelsea or Paddington. If one wants to be sure one is not missing anything, one has to rush round at the beginning of each week, and get hectically on the phone. One has to do this, because while lots of the more central cinemas often, with remarkable enterprise, show the same film, some odd little house in Tottenham Court Road or Kensal Rise may slip out some Russian picture. And the smaller places are the only ones we have where we may see what amount to revivals.

So that is the next bit of bad business ; we cannot find the films. Then, having found where, it is usually hard to find when we can see them. The time of showing is not sufficiently announced. And as in many cinemas one cannot reserve

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seats, one has to sit through some perfectly dreadful production that makes one wonder why one ever goes into a cinema, to make sure of seeing the movie one has come to see. There is an extraordinary view taken by cinema managers of how one may treat those who come for seats. If you have a big picture, you may raise the prices, and if you are like the Plaza, and have *Speedy*, you may placard up "Stalls, 3/6" and let people say "Stalls, please, 3/6." and then make them stand in rows along the wall or "oblige" them with a 2/4, nice and near the screen, and probably at the end.

Stills, too, though this is professional. There are not enough interesting stills made. The time has come when they are wanted for other purposes than advertising. Usually when I go, I am told that, there are not very many because *The Tatler* has had the best. Then I suggest that it is odd, that the best stills should be available for a gossipy social paper, at the expense of papers like *Close Up* or *The Studio*. The answer is, but it is so unusual for a paper like *The Tatler*, which isn't a movie paper, to want stills, that of course we give them the most striking. Of course ; it is good publicity.

But it is odd business.

Why, too, have stills, if you don't know who was responsible for them or what they show ? It is all flashed on the screen, I know, together with a heap of other facts. Plenty of information is given at the beginning, but what is the use of giving it, if there isn't time to receive ? Lists of director, assistant

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director, original writer, scenario writer, set designer, dress designer, cameramen, cutting and continuity experts are flung at you till out of sheer conservation of visual energy you discount them all. They mean nothing till you have seen the picture. Till you have seen the film, how can you tell whether you want to remember the name of the man who did the continuity? How can you pick out the name of the architect until you know that the sets interested you, and that it was not the lighting that was responsible? This creative film business, by which many live, in one sense, and some live, in another, is not taken seriously enough. We want to know all about the makers, not a lot of nothing about the dolls and dollars that were used in it. We want to know who thought of, and then who designed and then, perhaps who made, those huge deserted halls in *Heimweh*, the street in *La Tragédie* and again in *The Student*, the photographers who were in and under the aeroplanes in *Wings*, and the photographers of all sorts of quite ordinary American films, such as *Fine Manners*. And who can remember these by the time the film is over, when the only time they were announced, they were just so many names whose work had not been seen? Who can remember them after one showing? The list ought to be flashed on the screen again at the end, to give us a second chance, when we know what we liked, to see who gave us what we liked. Some of the bigger cinemas provide programmes, but only rarely do you get the name of even the cameraman on them, and unless the director is so well known that everybody can recognise his work, you often don't get the director's name. Even the

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programmes and souvenirs issued at trade shows overlook these things far too often. One wonders what kind of an idea the stunt men, the ad. men, the tie-up men have of their job. The films are made and then they are shown. The job ought to be to tell us who made the films and where we can see them. This is sheer commonsense, not frothy idealism.

It is true that one can readily understand why many directors and so on should wish to keep quiet about some of their productions ; but we, we who pay, have a right to know who inflicted such and such a movie on us. And if we can't find out, rather than suffer again (say, *Surrender*) we shall keep away. And if we don't know, and aren't allowed to know who made the good films, there is not inducement enough to go again. If the producers don't care, why should the public ? Why should it do their work for them ? There are a great many people just beginning, rather late, but still, beginning, to go to movies, and they want taking care of. All this talk about the next ten years in the history of the movies would be unnecessary if the advertising had been done on a decent businesslike basis for the last ten years, if this film business were taken more seriously.

There has been a film exhibition at the Hague, but who can pretend that it was sufficiently advertised ? Where were the posters, the coloured slides at movies, the advertisements and articles in magazines, the tie-ups with railways concerned. Who knew anything about it ?

That is what is wrong. There is too much publicity and

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not enough advertising. There is too much of a lopsided view and slack methods that have sprung up because some years ago it was said that people wanted to know about the "Shadow-folk". Frills were all right when people didn't know why they liked films, but now they do and they want the facts. Facts that they can use to build up their own knowledge with. And the only thing that can give this is a more efficient organisation. Less vagueness, some idea of what is wanted. There have been two instances. When France began meaning business about its quota, shoals and shoals of stars were sent over to Paris on spectacular honeymoons. The personal touch became a combined assault. But it was all rather vague, and didn't get anywhere. It was publicity. Then Uncle Doug came over, and he, whatever you think of his shoulders has a good business head. He brought Mary over on a Voyage of Solace. But they hadn't been over very long before they were briskly, if quietly, at Nice, in the vacant studios. Yes, they are going to make films there. It will get over the quota nicely, it will distract Mary... and there is a bit of a young star ramp in Hollywood. You may not like the methods, but you must admit he got there... BECAUSE he knew what he was at. The publicity firms don't, and that's the difference. So here are a few suggestions, because I bear no malice. Who could, when Norma Shearer doesn't mind being tied up with Kellogg's product?

ROBERT HERRING.

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THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN CINEMA

The yellow dogs of the movie industry have yelped their way to safe retreats, a pack of preachers at their heels. They have surrendered their bones, and they have even dug up unsuspected bones and trotted cravenly forth with them, waving peaceful tails. Harrassed by the reverend brethren, the movie monarchs agreed to omit profanity, all ridicule of the clergy and religion and all sneers at the 18th Amendment. However, this is only one of many signed statements wrung from the movies by the church, the censors and the Anti-Saloon League. Frank discussion of sex, the infrequent beauty of the human body (unless draped suggestively) and all hints at the radical in government or sociology disappeared long ago from the screens of America, impelled by the outraged toes of an emasculated minority. Not content with offering up sacrifices under threats of force, the movie monarchs descended another step from their thrones and voluntarily erased the Sacco-Vanzetti case from the screen, burning all news-reel shots of the murdered men. More, they leaped willingly down a whole flight of steps and promised, in preci-

* * *

Flaherty is a humorous, sandy-haired, somewhat portly Irishman. He has the air of a harrassed papa dumped unceremoniously down in a nest of madmen. By the time this is published, he may be in the South Seas, or in the Canadian Rockies, or in the insane asylum ; but at the moment he is tearing his hair out by the roots on the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lot at Culver City, a dreadful suburb of Los Angeles. *Moana* was his last independent venture. In order to continue making pictures, he was forced to accept a contract that would assure him money enough to go on with his experimental ideas. But he soon discovered that movie producers experiment with money, not with ideas.

Each in its own way, *Nanook* and the South Sea *Moana* are perfect gems of visual drama. From the first quiet scene, placing the characters in their element without unnecessary explanatory titles, to the last enthralling fadeout, there is not a wasted shot ; not a solitary bit of hokum ; not a scene without realism or beauty or realistic beauty. They are curiously alike, the one in a cold, bitter, northern sense, relieved by a humour we had not suspected in the Eskimo ; the other in a warm, passionate, southern way. The final fadeout on *Nanook* shows the title igloo being swept by a snow storm, the whitened wind blowing over a waste land of ice and snow ; the spectator can fairly hear the sad moan of the wind, mingled with the mournful howls of the dogs as they lie under

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increasing drifts of snow. The last scene of *Moana* is shot against the setting sun, the light fading as Moana and his betrothed dance their wedding dance, their naked, greased bodies swaying toward each other symbolically. . .

* * *

A parenthesis for the educational side. . . . Many grave professors have written treatises on the future use of the cinema in education ; some of them have even predicted that the motion picture will eventually supplant the printed page in our schools. I can find no patience for people who are eager to discard the old for the new, disregarding all the value in the old and overlooking every drawback in the new. It is absurd to look forward to such a state of things, for there are many facts that can be described better by words than by pictures. And there are references, dates, quotations and a multitude of other matters that must be in a form easily accessible, and it does not seem likely that a film is going to be hauled forth from storage—perhaps from the other end of the continent—and unreeled merely to discover that Columbus sailed across the Atlantic in 1492.

Beyond that, the professorial mind itself is an immovable stumbling block in the path of adequate education by pictures. The films will be selected by college presidents, boards of education and professors ; and when you reflect on the school-teacher taste in history and literature, you will see that they

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cannot fail to set before the students just such false and unpalatable messages in celluloid as they are now offering them in book form. The average educator has no sense of drama, no feeling for comedy, and no imagination. Professors prefer accurate and uninspired translations of the classics for their dramatic films—witness the popularity of that faithful but insipid rendering of *Romola* among the teaching fraternity—and their taste in educational films runs to the cataloguing kind. *Moana* will never be generally used in high schools and colleges—principally because of the Samoan girl's naked body; but not a little since it has beauty, imagination and truth. Yet it is just this sort of film that would do the growing boy and girl the most good, teaching them the unvarnished and unmoralized truth about strange countries, from the point of view of the native rather than of the superior-posing white commentator, and making no mawkish passes at putting veils upon the beauty of the native folk.

The matter of selection also offers many difficulties. Just now, there are three sources of films for education : those produced and distributed by the large companies ; those made by the smaller companies or by independent cameramen, which seldom get a wide distribution ; and those manufactured by colleges, such as the Yale *Chronicles of America* and the amateur films made by drama and photoplay departments. Distribution of all these pictures is irregular and spasmodic, and there are not exchanges near all the colleges and schools where the films may be viewed. Some of the schools are even taking old pictures made long before the War by the Essanay

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and Biograph companies and hawked about the country by state-rights exchanges, either because the schools cannot afford anything else or because they don't know any better. The remedy seems to be a system of exchanges scattered about the country in sufficient numbers to afford all schools and colleges reasonably easy access to the projection rooms, these exchanges to draw upon all the producers in the world, of whatever nature. Such a venture—even if the educators could get the films on consignment, to be paid for only when used—would probably prove too costly to be practical. But, admitting that it is put into effect, we are faced again by the incompetency of educators to choose the right material, even from so large an offering.

* * *

Made compulsory in schools, the movies would soon be quite as tiresome, and therefor as ineffectual, as the ordinary textbooks are now. The possibility presents itself that afternoon performances could be arranged at the local theatres, for school children only. Since this would open a definite paying market for educational films and would stimulate the trade of the producer's only real customer, the exhibitor, the producers would be quick to take advantage of it by turning out travel films, fairy tales, short dramas of life, historic episodes scientific reeils, etc.

Some years ago, William Fox made a series of films with

clever children, among them *Jack and the Beanstalk*, quite excellent things for their day and delightful for children. But they were unsuccessful, since the exhibitors showed them to mixed audiences, or to adults only. The movie audience is not made up of children but of adult children who sniff at charming fairy tales but flock to fairy tales of grownups in a travesty of life. Even where children's matinees were given, they were not patronized. That is a thing we can safely blame on the parents, who made no effort to point out the right pictures for their children to see, or refused to bore themselves by accompanying them to screenings of *The Wizard of Oz* or *Alice in Wonderland*. But these same parents made no bones about dragging the children to pictures of adult "life", equally tiresome to the puzzled, sleepy kids. That is, they were willing enough to bring them to these pictures ; but if anything untoward happened, they raised a violent protest and closed the local cinema house for debauching the morals of youngsters, who probably saw little and understood less of what passed across the screen.

* * *

Permit us an imaginary flight to that period of the future when the cinema shall have men of courage and ideals in positions of power ; when there will be theatres for these men to exhibit their products ; when there will be a decent percentage of good films to offer the minority whose gorge rises at the

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hollow falsity, impossible and tiresome melodrama, laughless comedy, and maudlin sentiment that is shoveled out to us in these days. . . .

It seems to me that the future of the dramatic cinema lies along paths indicated by *Nanook of the North* and *Moana*, and by *Potemkin* and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Into the travalogue-story method used by Flaherty, the dramatic episode reality of *Potemkin*, and the impressionistic setting of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* there will be infused a touch of the grotesque and yet alive and natural handling of the camera that makes a city live, as in *Ballet Mécanique* and *Metropolis*, and that relieves human beings and sets of a photographic appearance, as in *The Last Laugh* and *Variety*. Individual methods will remain for their proper use in different pictures. Whatever happens, the foreign pictures and *Nanook* will be the starting point. Flaherty's picture proved that a film can be made without a plot. Life contains few plots—only themes, disjointed stories, isolated gestures, and unrelated episodes that build a layer of what we call character about a man as the years roll down the hill. The dramatic cinema of the future must put life on the screen above all things, and it must do that fearlessly or it will have no excuse for existence.

The lighter form of motion picture has developed beyond the straight drama, and it is not necessary to look too far ahead for its ultimate perfection. Ernst Lubitsch and his followers have already brought it to an exquisitely finished state. Unlike the heavier drama it does not demand honesty in its statement of life ; but curiously, because of its supposedly less

harmful nature, it has actually managed to reach a far greater fearlessness under cover of a levity that deceives the censors. I do not refer to the common type of comedy such as *We're in the Navy Now*—the gods forbid!—but to subtle, pointed and sometimes satirical pieces like Lubitsch's *The Marriage Circle* and James Cruze's gorgeous mockery, *Hollywood*. These gay affairs are the nearest approach to satire that the movies have produced in America; and that the approach has been no closer may be more justly blamed upon the public and the censors than on the producers. Satire goes over the public's head, and below the censor's belt.

WILBUR NEEDHAM.

CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE

SLOW MOTION

XI

No one who heard the hysterical laughter that greeted the first slow-motion pictures can fail to be struck by the quiet bearing of the average audience of today when confronted by these strange transformations. And were it not for a haunting suspicion of the part played by mere familiarity with the

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spectacle, it would be possible to claim this change of attitude as the surest direct evidence of the educative power of the film. But if familiarity alone is responsible for the change, then that dreadful laughter, coming after years of experience of what the film can do, must stand, a mocking mark of interrogation over against the articles of our faith. Yet since there is other evidence, and particularly the mass of evidence accumulated in the minds of those who have experience of the evolution of single local audiences in regard to "the pictures", to confirm that faith, we may take courage to assume that from the first, behind the laughter, recognition was there and has grown. If now it is present, it was there from the first, for without its work there would be no second seeing. Each seeing would have been a first and the laughter would have continued.

And yet, recalling that first revelation, doubt creeps in on behalf of just this one of the many offerings of the film. Can anyone forget the revelation, the two revelations, of beauty upon the screen and the beast confronting it? Has that particular beauty conquered the beast, become a joy forever, or just passed into nothingness? Indeed it is difficult to say. For there must have been incidents. Indignant people must have hushed the gigglers. Sensitive people must have cried out in ecstatic appreciation and produced wonder that upon the next opportunity turned to attention hopeful of discovering the hidden charm.

Experience gathered in one small local cinema would hopefully suggest that the first laughter for the first slow-motion

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picture is partly to be credited to the nature of the movement and the manner in which it was offered. For it was a picture of runners at close quarters to each other upon the last lap of a mile race. The three figures, first shown moving at normal pace were in desperate competition, agonised heads thrown back, open mouths agasp at the last effort for supremacy ; not a pleasing exhibition. It flashed away and a caption spoke : "Now see what our slow-motion camera can do", an invitation to watch a conjuring trick, preparation for something that was to impress by its cleverness. And it is possible that if we had been shown stills of these men caught in the various attitudes born of their movement, beauty might clearly have emerged. But though it was there in the balanced movement of the athletes advancing as if though resistant air, there was also a sharp touch of the grotesque as these figures with arms arched, and rigid, air-clutching fingers, slowly, goose-steppingly lifted leaden limbs in shorts. The anxious faces, the air of infinite caution, were legitimately funny and the avalanche of laughter may be interpreted as joyous welcome for yet another revelation of the comic possibilities of the film.

The next slow-motion exhibition was of horses clearing a hedge and ditch in a steeple-chase, and throughout the majestic spectacle, from the moment the great beasts slowly rearing left the earth until again they lightly, as if weightlessly, touched it in descent, there was nothing that could even remotely appeal to the eye on the look-out for pretexts for mirth. But the laughter came, for the slowness, the anomaly. There were those no doubt who held breath in wonder and delight.

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But the result, regarding the audience as one person, was, as before, registration of a freakish incidental of the new entertainment.

The first slow of these early days that failed to precipitate either the avalanche of derision or the chorus of sniggers was of a man taking a high jump. And here perhaps all lesser emotions were submerged in that of stupefaction at the sheer marvel of the levitation. It was offered simply for what it was, Mr. Jones winning the high jump, without preparative suggestion. We was Mr. Jones run and lightly leap and clear, and reach the ground in an athletic sprawl. And then again there were the high posts and the bar and the relatively small man held to earth by a pointed toe, who rose as if dreaming, slowly through the air upon which as he cleared the bar he lay sideways in repose, on his face the look of blissful concentration given in religious art to saints whose battles are won, indolently stretching one limb to slant downwards beyond the bar and bring its fellow following and the whole elastic body to move poised in the air upon the outstretched toe that sought and lightly found the earth. Perfect silence greeted this revelation of the miraculous commonplace. It won. Was bound to win. Its beauty and its wonder were imperious demands, overwhelming.

And the revelation bestowed by the ecstatic face, of the spirit withdrawn, within the body it was operating, to the point of perfect concentration, showing this business of athletic achievement as one with every kind of human achievement, with that of the thinker, the artist and the saint, is one

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of the most priceless offerings to date of the film considered as a vehicle for revealing to mankind that in man which is unbounded. If tomorrow every vestige of this new art were swept away save just one slow of a human body hoisting itself over a high bar, the film would not have existed in vain.

DOROTHY M. RICHARDSON.

CINÉ-CLUB DE GENÈVE REÇOIT CAVALCANTI ET GERMAINE DULAC

Cavalcanti, d'abord, vint à Genève le 18 avril, et les membres de Ciné-Club, en nombre réjouissant, assistèrent à la projection de ses trois chefs-d'œuvre : *Rien que les heures*, *En Rade*, *La petite Lilie*.

Comme Jean Tedesco, Cavalcanti commenta brièvement, très brièvement même, le but qu'il s'est assigné, en insistant sur la nécessité qui s'imposait de sauver le public de l'intoxication lente produite par les films commerciaux, ajoutant de plus qu'une action vraiment efficace ne peut être entreprise sans l'aide de tous les cinéphiles. Cavalcanti ayant horreur des conférences, s'abstint d'en dire davantage et confia au film le soin d'exposer plus en détail ce que le Cinéma peut exprimer lorsqu'il est conçu par une âme d'artiste.

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Rien que les heures ! « Rien que », voilà qui nous étonne car nous ne sommes pas accoutumés à voir les films s'entourer d'une modestie semblable. Ce titre nous repose déjà des mots grandiloquents dont s'étiquette la production commune. Rien que les heures ! eh oui, ce n'est que cela, des heures qui défilent sur l'écran, des heures qui passeront et passeront encore. Verrons-nous l'habituel salon où déambulent quelques beautés plastiques préoccupées avant tout de l'unique soin de paraître ? Cavalcanti se plaît à nous rassurer sans retard. Non ! ce n'est pas là qu'il marquera le temps, et, fébrilement, une main déchire l'album de mode où nos mannequins ont repris leur place. La rutilante voiture disparaît à son tour, faisant place au charriot de pauvre... c'est bien dans le monde déclassé des humbles que nous irons chercher l'essence même de la vie. Des yeux, rien que des yeux, mais curieux, éveillés, et les aspects divers de la ville telle que les peintres l'ont vue... nous la verrons aussi, notre œil sera l'objectif, froid, impitoyable. Nous surprendrons le chat noir rôdant sur une poutre, les rats grignotant on ne sait quoi dans un coin de cour obscure... et le pauvre dans son taudis. L'apache, la fille, les agents de police, le matelot courant à la recherche du plaisir, rien ne nous échappe, notre présence ne gêne personne, et, chose plus rare encore, personne ne « joue » semble-t-il, devant nous. Notre champ visuel varie sans cesse, nous serons tout à l'heure au haut d'une maison dominant une étroite ruelle où trébuche une forme indé-cise que nous reverrons encore, cherchant en plein midi, un coin d'ombre pour se garantir des ardeurs du soleil... une petite vieille, ce n'est que ça, une petite vieille ! Son visage n'ex-

prime rien, c'est à nous de sentir, quel privilège. Jusqu'ici on ne nous l'accordait guère et dans la plupart des films on nous mène gentiment par la main de peur que nous ne nous égarions et nous méprenions quant aux intentions des personnages. Mais Cavalcanti a compris qu'il faut réserver à la vie un petite part et tenir compte un peu des réalités. L'art ne dicte pas de loi.

Si *Rien que les heures* n'est qu'une succession de tableaux animés d'où toute intrigue est théoriquement bannie, *En Rade* laisse soupçonner une histoire sans toutefois que celle-ci en impose aux événements et les presse de traduire. *En Kade*, c'est le port, les hautes cheminées d'usine dans la fumée desquelles le jour a peine à naître. C'est aussi et surtout la nostalgie du marin retenu au rivage, d'où il assiste avec amertume au départ des bateaux.

Voici "*la petite Lilie*" véritable fresque, toute de finesse et de grâce. Catherine Hessling sera la petite Lilie comme elle fut la petite Marchande d'allumettes, c'est à dire que le rythme entier du film sautille de jeunesse, de fraîcheur et d'esprit. L'action se mêle intimement à la chanson et, celle-ci, toute banale, se poétise à nos yeux. Les images se succèdent, fugitives, empressées et tout n'est ici que légèreté délicate.

Mr. Poulin a montré, une fois de plus, qu'il comprenait à merveille l'art de souligner mélodieusement le film,

* * *

Le 2 mai, les cinéphiles genevois se réunirent à nouveau au Cinéma Étoile, et, cette fois, c'est Germaine Dulac qui expo-

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sera sa conception personnelle du cinéma en une conférence intitulée « Visualisation... et souvenirs ». En voici quelques passages :

« Le sculpteur, le peintre, l'écrivain peuvent exprimer librement ce qu'ils sentent, mais le régisseur de cinéma est, lui, esclave de la loi qui veut que tout soit subordonné au désir de plaire au public. Le régisseur n'a qu'une liberté, celle de choisir, entre plusieurs scénarios, celui qui lui plaît le mieux. Nous ne pouvons parler jusqu'ici, d'un art indépendant, spontané, et tant que durera cet état de choses il sera impossible de produire un film véritablement personnel et artistique. L'évolution de l'art muet nous permet cependant d'espérer une orientation nouvelle et un affranchissement prochain de ces contingences... et c'est alors que nous pourrons recréer le film, en faire une œuvre visuelle, dont la valeur résidera uniquement dans l'impression optique obtenue par l'image, ou la succession d'images. Un bon film ne se raconte pas, raconte-t-on un tableau, une statue ? Évidemment non, et il doit bien en être de même du film, qui est avant photographie de la vie. Les images ne doivent pas se prêter à une interprétation littéraire et le choc artistique qu'elles peuvent produire en nous ne devra être le fait que de leurs qualités visuelles.

La sincérité est peut-être la pierre de touche unique d'un bon film. Cette sincérité fait défaut à la production commune, qui flatte l'instinct populaire, évite tout ce qui pourrait le choquer un tant soit peu. Elle est remarquable, cette sincérité dans les films russes, car ces gens sentent fortement et ont des aspirations définies qui créent une atmosphère franche et nette

de toutes superfluités. Il en était de même des films suédois. Aussi nous demandons-nous s'il ne serait pas indiqué de chercher à développer avant tout le film national, le film où la race se manifeste intacte et indépendante. »

Voici le curieux essai de Germaine Dulac : *La coquille et le Clergyman* qui vient illustrer de façon toute spéciale les aspirations de son auteur. Ce ne sont que photographies et aucun texte ne vient briser la succession des images, toutes suggestives en elles-mêmes d'une idée qui ne trouve, malheureusement, qu'un appui éphémère. Il y a certainement des choses remarquables et ce film est un album richement illustré de possibilités intéressantes, de moyens cinématographiques, où il serait aisé de relever maintes visions géniales. Mais au point de vue purement spectaculaire, il ne saurait constituer un modèle à imiter car il faut un sens aux choses pour que nous y prenions de l'intérêt. Il s'agit d'une sorte de rêve, a dit Germaine Dulac. C'est bien cela, mais les éléments de ce rêve appartiennent trop en propre à celle qui les a disposés sur l'écran et, tels qu'ils nous sont communiqués, ils « cuisinent » trop notre esprit et le mettent à une véritable petite torture, qu'il subira avec une patience plus ou moins prolongée car il espère toujours saisir un fil conducteur, une trame visible, quelque indice qui lui explique enfin l'incohérence de ce clergyman qui passe son temps à remplir de petites fioles de liquide au moyen d'une coquille, puis à briser une à une ces fioles. Nous suivons ce personnage dans ses déplacements hystériques et le voyons tantôt courir dans la campagne à la poursuite d'une femme... trangler un officier dont la tête va s'ouvrir comme une porte

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à deux battants, tenter inutilement d'apprivoiser la compagne de cet officier puis la traiter peu « clergymanlike » et enfin errer dans d'interminables couloirs où il ouvre d'innombrables portes.

Un rêve de clergyman ? Possible, après tout, et Freud trouverait là une illustration intéressante de sa théorie des refoulements.

Mais j'ai l'impression toutefois que le film envisagé sous cet aspect dépasse quelque peu son rôle artistique et s'isole dans une conception trop personnelle et par là incommunicable. Nous sommes trop Occidentaux pour nous complaire à ces rêves purement visuels ; notre esprit ne veut pas abdiquer complètement, d'où son irritation en percevant la débauche de sensations que l'œil lui apporte pêle-mêle et qu'il ne parvient pas à ordonner. L'art « Muet » ne saurait viser à justifier entièrement cette propriété, qui n'a trait du reste qu'au jeu silencieux des personnages et si l'on écarte de l'action toute idée réelle on tombe fatalement dans un impressionnisme curieux, cela va sans dire, mais en somme il est peu probable qu'en orientant le cinéma vers une telle immatérialité on lui assure jamais un avenir heureux auprès des foules. On se rebute à l'aspect d'un film qui ne veut rien livrer et qui se joue de notre curiosité. Tôt ou tard, l'indifférence, sinon l'ironie, se vengent de telles prétentions. Mais, malgré tout, que de merveilles dans *La Coquille et le Clergyman*.

Les membres de Ciné-Club, encore abasourdis pour la plupart, par cette mystérieuse coquille et cet énigmatique clergyman, ont le privilège d'assister ensuite à la projection du film

russe: *Dura Lex (Sühne)* que Germaine Dulac a eu la charmante idée de nous apporter, *Dura Lex*, d'après la nouvelle de Jack London, joué par des acteurs russes, voilà qui est évidemment réunir un maximum de sincérité et de naturel. L'action se passe sur les rives du Yukon, entre cinq personnages typiques. L'Or a attiré ces humains dans ces solitudes où tout se passe normalement jusqu'au jour où deux des aventuriers sont tués par le souffre-douleur de la bande, Denny. Il ne reste qu'un couple et l'assassin, ce n'en sera que plus émouvant. La femme, une Anglaise, attachée fermement aux mœurs et à la religion de son pays, défend l'assassin contre la fureur de son époux. Elle le défendra avec l'énergie que seule peut donner une foi inébranlable, et la vie se poursuit, intolérable, dans la petite cabane que la débâcle des glaces a isolée du monde. Puis un jour il faut juger Denny, et les deux survivants condamnent le troisième à la pendaison, selon la loi. Un tableau de la Reine d'Angleterre est accroché à la paroi... tout est donc bien... Les jambes du pendu oscillent dans l'air, la femme et l'homme regagnent, effondrés, la cabane que la tempête environne de toutes parts. Mais, dans la nuit, la porte s'ouvre lentement et Denny réapparaît, ironique, la corde fixée encore au cou : Tenez, si elle peut vous porter bonheur ! Il leur jette au pied la corde qui s'était brisée, prend l'or qui se trouve sur la table et disparaît au lointain.

Ce film est traité toujours sobrement, ce qui ajoute à la grandeur morale des personnages. Nous ne sommes pas habitués, avouons-le, à un jeu pareillement naturel et sensible et ne pouvons que regretter dès lors de n'être plus souvent à même



Maldone a new French film by Charles Dullin, remarkable for its technique. Charles Dullin as Maldone, now rich and formerly poor, finds himself crushed by the impositions of his new life, and muses on the stairway to the garret.



Having found his old clothes in the garret, he dons them, only to see in the mirror always the rich Maldone — Maldone prisoner of his wealth. He fires at this mocking reflect on and is about to flee.

2



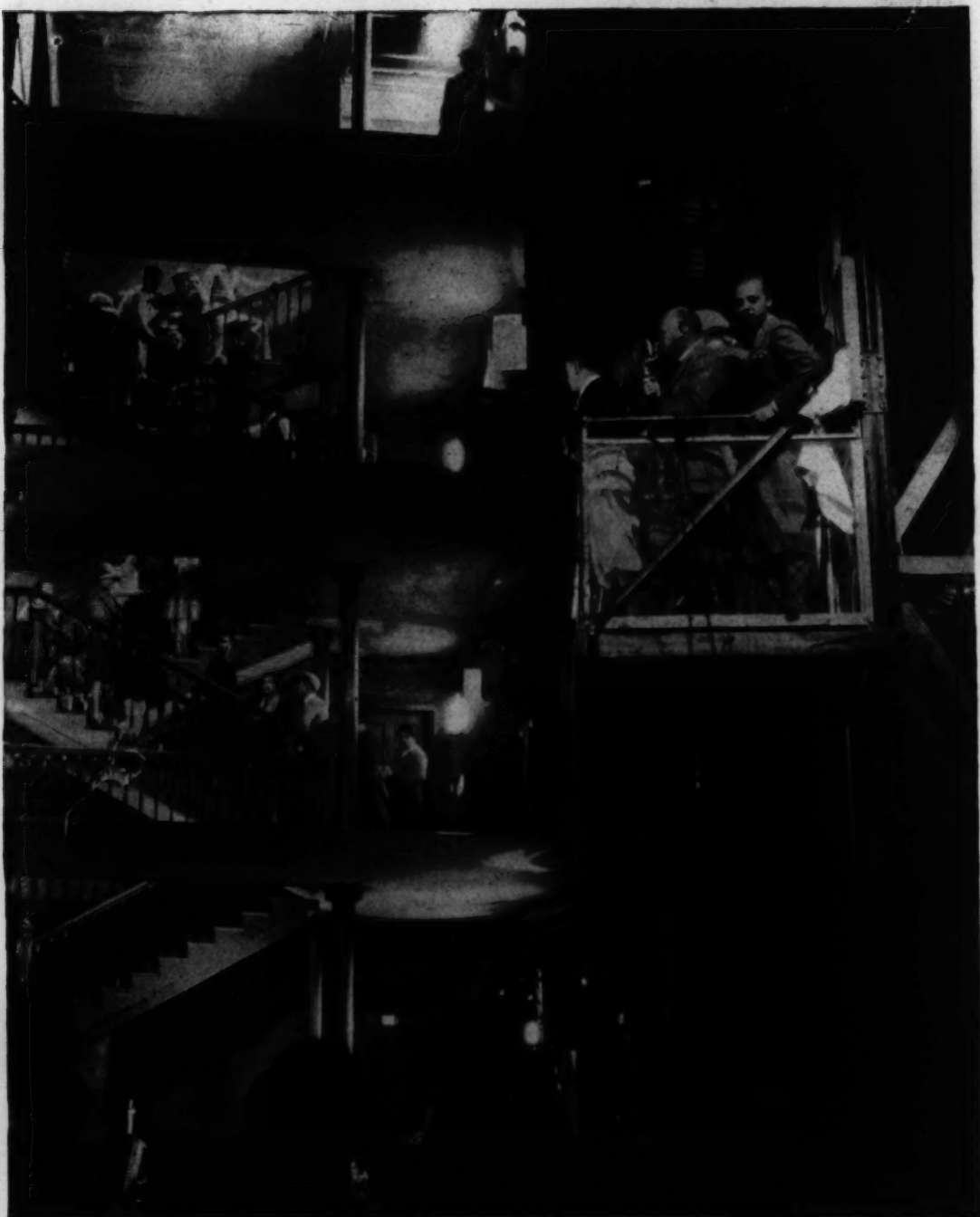
Marcelle Dullin and Annabella in *Maldone*. They are still poor and Maldone steers his barge down the canals.



The Godless Girl, Cecil de Mille's forthcoming picture, which is going to create a furore, being an indictment of the reformatory school system in America. Lina Basquette as the aspotle of atheism.



Whe nwe were kids, being caught at something like this meant a licking. But possibly Lina Basquette can get away with it, being the featured player in her "teacher's" latest production "The Godless Girl". Lina is a high school girl in this C. B. De Mille production.



One of the most unusual "shots" ever filmed for a motion picture was taken during camera-work on "The Godless Girl", Cecil B. De Mille's current production. A four-story building, cut down the centre, provided the set, the dramatic action on all four floors at once, as well as on each floor, being photographed through the use of a moving camera-carriage, capable of moving forward or backward, up or down. Cecil D. De Mille, with the microphone of the loud speaker through which he gives directions, and the members of his camera-crew are seen on the camera carriage during the filming of a scene.



Two of the many interesting set drawings by Larrinaga for *the Godless Girl*, Cecil B. De Mille's next personally directed picture for Pathe release.



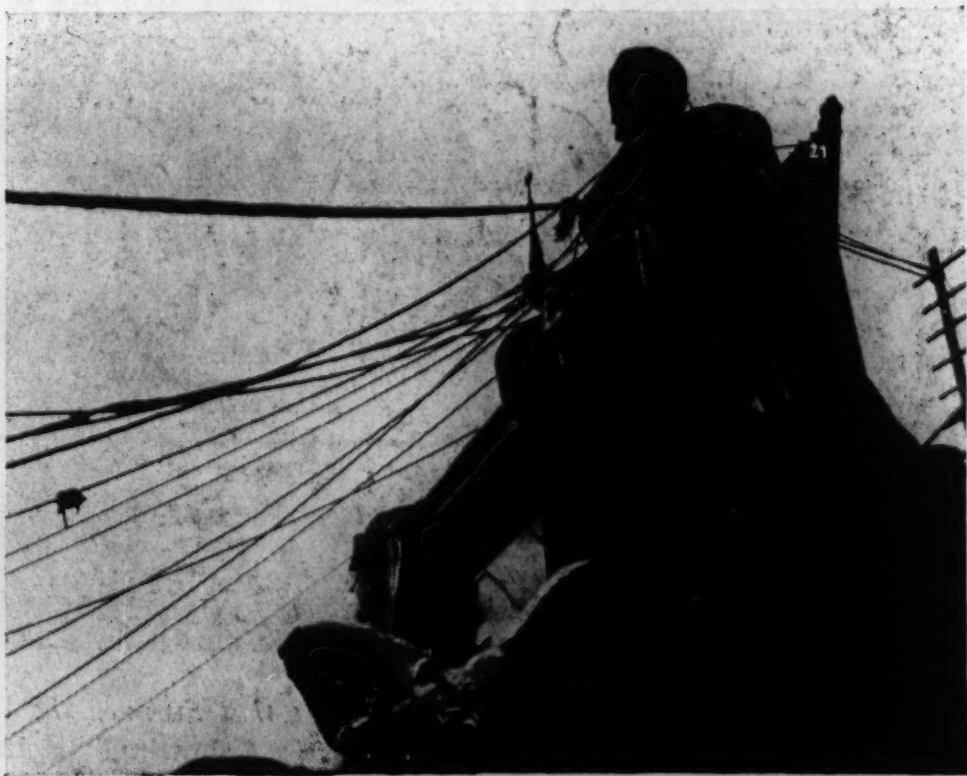
The tragic ending of the riot among the high school students attending an atheist meeting. De Mille has sworn statements of the truth of most of the scenes depicted in his film, in order to forstall those who might take legal exception.



From *the Postmaster*, a Meshrabpom-Russ film starring Moskvine (not to be confused with Mosjoukine). The story is taken from the novel by Poushkin.



From *10 Tage die die Welt Erschutterten* (*Ten Days that Shook the World*) S. M. Eisenstein's new picture, made for Sovkino. It is to be feared that the general public will have no more chance to see this than they did *Potemkin* his previous film, although it had much success in Berlin.



The overthrow of Tzardom, and its symbols. Much was cut from the film at the last minute—a real loss to the student of film progress. These are the first stills to be printed abroad and



10 Tage die die Welt Erschütterten (Ten Days that Stunned the World).
This film was forbidden in Zurich after its first showing. It has been
bought for America.

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d'apprécier l'effort des cinéastes de la grande Russie, car ce sont eux, n'en doutons pas, qui rajeuniront et vivifieront le film en apportant au cinéma leur ardeur et leur énergie nouvelle.

FREDDY CHEVALLEY.

THE SPY

The Great War once it was over, gave place to complete chaos not only in the government of nations but in the mentality of men themselves. And there was one who profited from this breakdown of principles and ideas. But no one knew who it was. No one knew where he assembled his accomplices to send them off to accomplish their two-sided missions. But no one could doubt that such a man existed and the crimes committed in his name multiplied day after day. Thefts, exactions, betrayals of all kinds, including a necessary murder, these were the terrible programme of his universal politics. But nobody would suspect that the director of this witches sabbath was any other than a man of inoffensive appearance, the director of the Haghy Bank, whose monumental forehead constituted for him an immovable mask. This man had secret relations with a Centre of espionage which possessed an information bureau in every

country, fitted up with modern appliances ; wireless stations for sending and receiving messages, wireless photography, telephones, etc.

A new Fritz Lang film. The Spy.

Again this director has inovated several new methods of cinematographic technique.

It was neccessary to display much ingenuity to transpose scenario and action (taken from a novel by Thea von Harbou) with as much fidelity as possible to the screen, for the scenario included several passages which depended for their effect entirely upon the director. But it is precisely in these, that Fritz Lang triumphs.

A certain number of criticisms might be made about this film but it is certain that it will meet with an enthusiastic reception from the public on account of the story and the new aspects with which it is worked out.

The manner in which Fritz Lang has arranged the different shots gives an extraordinary rhythm of life, to the whole film, which is neither always logical nor regular, but which darts off in a positive tangle of events and then suddenly slackens in pace ; this must produce a bizarre effect upon the spectator whose nerves are continually played upon by an uncreasing flow of impressions.

But Fritz Lang knows his public. He goes on without hesitating in his own way. Neither groping nor evasive yet all the same it is not always apossible to discern the eventual goal at which he would arrive.

In spite however of some faults which this film reveals and

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which distinguish it, from an artistic point of view, from the preceding ones, it is undeniable that the talent of the director Fritz Lang be recognized.

It is easy to guess from his films that Fritz Lang loves Gothic. Even his style is. . . Gothic !

Lang was born in Vienna and his father who was an architect there wanted to make him an engineer, but Lang was not attracted by such a prospect. He preferred to make his own way and follow his instincts. His existence from that moment was that of the artist.

He studied drawing first, then painting, was an actor on the stage, then lecturer and diseur at the Varieties, travelled in Italy, in northern Africa, to arrive finally in Paris, where he came in contact for the first time with the cinematographic world.

The war at an end, he became more and more interested in cinematography, studied its principles and said one day himself : "that is my path, I must follow it." He produced first of all "Müden Tod !" and this film drew attention to his name. Then came the *Nibelungen* and at last *Metropolis*. And people realised that there was behind these a director of intelligence and breath.

Spies. Here is his latest film.

He show us in it several actors as yet unknown, apart from Willy Fritsch, whose acting seems to have improved, if this is possible, from the expert direction of Lang. Klein-Rogge appears in demoniacal disguise, really at times a little too fantastic. Lupu Pick acts with realism and success the part of

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the Japanese attache. Gerda Maurus brings an interesting talent to her part but does not yet seem quite at ease in her technique, whereas the little Lien Deyers shows great aptitude and promise.

HELLMUND-WALDOW.

NOTES SUR QUELQUES FILMS

MALDONE

Après le succès personnel qu'il remporta dans *Le Miracle des Loups* et dans *Le joueur d'Échecs*, Monsieur Charles Dullin a fondé une Société de Production : « Les Films Charles Dullin ».

Cette société a présenté son premier film : *Maldone*.

J'aimerais bien faire entendre avant de parler de ce film que, malgré tous ses défauts, *Maldone* est un film intéressant, qui fait honneur à la Société qui en a entrepris la réalisation. Les auteurs sont, par leur culture et leur intelligence, bien supérieurs à la plupart des réalisateurs, dont l'esprit primaire et prétentieux rend tant de films insupportables. C'est pourquoi nous attendons plus d'eux que des autres, et que nous les critiquons plus sévèrement.

Quand les metteurs en scène se persuaderont-ils qu'un bon

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scénario est aussi important qu'une bonne réalisation ? M. Dullin semble l'avoir compris. Au lieu de s'adresser à un scénariste quelconque il a demandé un scénario à un jeune écrivain fort estimé : M. Alexandre Arnoux. Est-ce le premier contact de M. Arnoux avec le cinéma ? ou est-ce vraiment ainsi qu'il conçoit le cinéma ? Le scénario qu'il a donné me semble fort peu « cinéma ». C'est de la littérature, et pas de la meilleure. A voir le film on a peine à croire qu'il a été fait d'après un scénario « original » et que ce n'est pas là une adaptation trop fidèle d'un roman.

A la suite d'un coup de tête, un fils de famille, Olivier Maldone, a quitté la maison paternelle, il s'est fait roulier. Les jours se suivent, les jours se ressemblent : Maldone, insouciant, conduit ses chevaux, qui tirent les lourds chalands sur les canaux. Le soir, dans les auberges, il aime à boire, à danser, à courtiser les filles. Il est heureux. Le jeune frère de Maldone, le dernier descendant de la famille, est tué dans un accident. Le domaine va-t-il rester sans héritiers ? Un vieux serviteur part à la recherche du fils prodigue, le retrouve, le ramène. Cinq années passent... Nous retrouvons Maldone riche, marié, père d'un enfant. Mais Maldone s'ennuie. Il est prisonnier de sa richesse. La vie paisible et monotone d'un petit château de province lui est insupportable. Il songe à la belle bohémienne qu'il a rencontrée autrefois, près d'une écluse, à sa vie errante... Il reprend ses habits et abandonne la maison pour la seconde fois.

L'idée centrale du sujet est belle et intéressante. Mes critiques vont à la façon dont elle a été traduite à l'écran. Je n'aime

pas non plus beaucoup cette division de l'action en deux parties que sépare un intervalle de cinq années pendant lesquelles nous perdons de vue le héros. Il aurait été intéressant de voir, d'entrevoir la transition, la réadaptation. Du moment que nous retrouvons Maldone cinq ans plus tard, nous devinons sans grand effort que, comme il était pauvre et heureux dans la première partie, il va être malheureux maintenant qu'il est riche, dans la seconde. Présentée ainsi, cette seconde partie est bien banale et conventionnelle. Pourquoi Maldone s'est-il laissé enchaîner ? Comment, peu à peu a-t-il lui-même forgé ses chaînes ?

Le réalisateur, Monsieur Jean Grémillon, est un jeune metteur en scène, dont nous avons déjà vu *Tour au Large*, un petit film d'étude sur la mer, qui a passé au Vieux Colombier. Grémillon est un technicien de premier ordre. Mais comment n'a-t-il pas compris que pour un sujet de ce genre, tout à fait d'émotion et de poésie, un peu de cœur remplaçait souvent avantageusement l'habileté ? Il nous a donné une éblouissante démonstration de sa virtuosité, mais qui fait le plus grand tort à l'ensemble du film. *Maldone* est une carte d'échantillon de tout ce que l'on peut faire avec un appareil. Rien ne nous a été épargné. Un film de virtuosité pure serait fort intéressant, à condition qu'il ne dure pas plus d'une demi-heure ; mais au cours d'un film la recherche de l'angle pour l'angle devient horripilante. Et quelle erreur, au point de vue « art », comme au point de vue commercial, d'avoir présenté un film de 3.800 mètres. Les spectateurs qui avaient bien « tenu » jusqu'à l'entr'acte, dont le moral et l'opinion étaient à ce moment assez

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bons, sont sortis, à la fin, excédés, abrutis, soulés. Il faut savoir choisir. Que de choses inutiles à élaguer ; des choses qui, je le sais, sont excellentes en elles-mêmes, mais qui font poids mort, qui entravent le développement du film. Si j'insiste un peu sur ce point c'est que nous attendions beaucoup du film de cette société, la première qui ait à la fois des directeurs de valeur et les capitaux suffisants pour mener à bien une œuvre importante. Nous avons été un peu déçus de voir un film dont l'émotion vraie est à peu près absente, un film de démonstration technique qu'une autre société aurait sans doute pu faire aussi bien.

Je dis : « sans doute », il est vrai, car jamais encore je n'ai vu une photographie plus belle que dans Maldone. C'est une éclatante démonstration des qualités de la pellicule panchromatique et il faut féliciter sans réserves les techniciens qui ont assuré les prises de vues et ont su réaliser une bande d'une aussi remarquable égalité dans sa qualité. Parmi les extérieurs, tous très beaux, je voudrais citer cette étonnante vue du début : la grande route blanche, interminable, sous un ciel d'orage, et qui montre bien quels effets pathétiques on peut tirer d'un simple paysage. C'est un film qui sera pour beaucoup une révélation de ce que l'on peut obtenir dans le domaine de la photographie pure ; dans l'interprétation photographique d'un paysage, d'une nature morte ou d'un visage.



Je saisis cette occasion pour répondre à Mr. O. B. qui dans

son article *Vision d'histoire* paru dans *Close Up* de février, critique Léon Poirier, la pellicule panchromatique et l'appareil Debie. Je n'ai pas à défendre M. Poirier, qui a toute une œuvre derrière lui, et dont *La Brière*, tournée en 1924, a été une sorte de chef d'œuvre photographique.

Apprenons cependant à Mr. O. B. que la pellicule panchromatique exige l'emploi, dans de fréquentes circonstances, de filtres de couleur. Ce n'est pas seulement pour avoir l'air savant devant les curieux qui viennent assister aux prises de vues (et qui empoisonnent les metteurs en scène) que les opérateurs s'en encombrent. Il peut lire à ce sujet un petit livre édité par la maison Kodak et qui est fort bien fait.

Quant à ce que dit Mr. O. B. de l'appareil Debie, c'est tout simplement ridicule. Le *Parvo* n'est sans doute pas parfait, mais c'est déjà un miracle d'avoir pu réunir tant de précision et tant de solidité. Mon *Parvo* s'est promené pendant 10 mois sur la tête d'un porteur, au centre de l'Afrique, exposé à toutes les intempéries, et il n'a pas « bougé ». Je n'ai pas eu un mètre de rayé. Les rayures, quand il y en a, proviennent d'une négligence ou d'un manque de soin de la part de l'opérateur ? Elles sont dues, non aux velours, mais à ce que les glissières de la fenêtre sont en mauvais état.



Carl Th. Dreyer, a terminé le montage du film auquel il travaille depuis plus d'un an : *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*. Dreyer a travaillé à son film dans le plus grand secret. Non pas



Verdun, Vision d'Histoire, the recently completed film of Léon Poirier, which is now being assembled in the cutting room. This still is worth studying as a clue to the general treatment. Note the lighting detail and composition. *Verdun* is taken on panchromatic film.



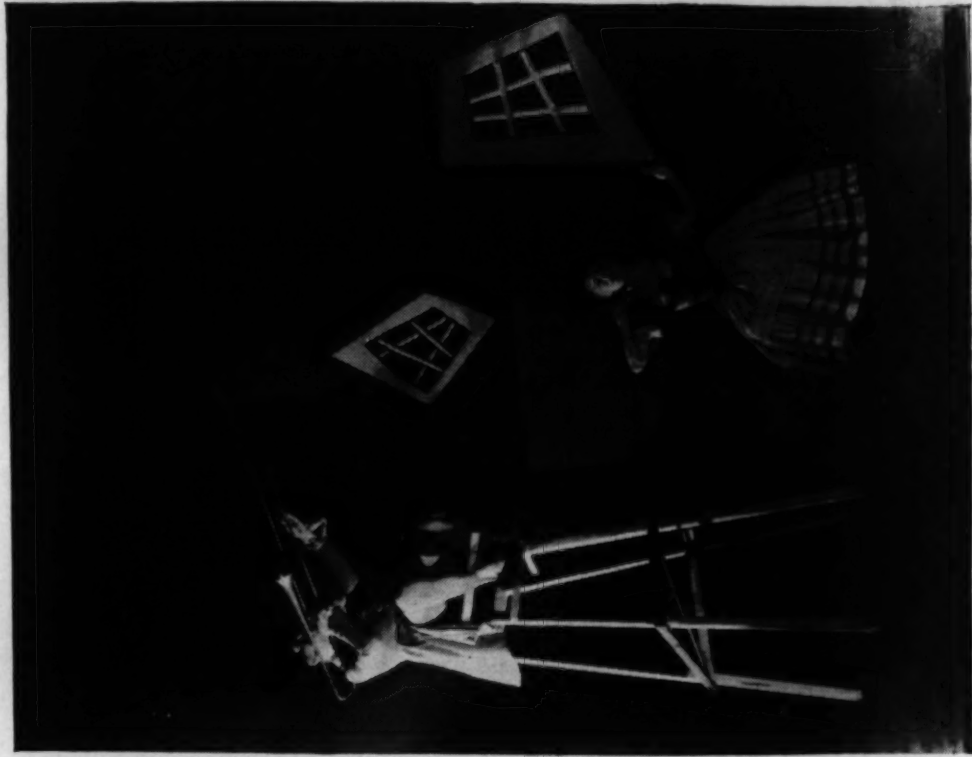
Flucht aus der Hölle, one of the new Derussa films, directed by Georg Asagaroff. A dramatic shot used for the escape of Louis Ralph (back).



Flucht aus der Hölle, a Phoenix-Film production, deals with the Cayenne convict settlement. Here Louis Ralph has protested against the food supplied. This film had a great success at the Ufa Palast am Zoo, in Berlin.



Robert Florey, the young Frenchman who is exciting the wonderment of Hollywood by his impressionistic films, which are as remarkable for their treatment as for their astonishingly low cost of production. See particulars in *Comment and Review*.



The Sad Love of Zero, a 1200-foot impressionistic film by Robert Florey, produced for 125 dollars. Zero (Joseph Marievsky), after the day's work entertains his adoring wife (Tamaza Shavrova) with trombone solos. The set consists of the cement walk in a studio lot, and a wall with pasted on windows and door. This is the only still made.



One of the sets (built of cardboard in miniature) of Robert Florey's *The Life and Death of 9413 (formerly the Rhapsody of Hollywood)*. Particulars of his work will be found in *Comment and Review*.

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le secret des gens qui veulent faire du mystère pour intriguer, le secret « d'échos de publicité ». Mais le secret des gens qui savent ce qu'ils veulent faire et qui se soucient peu de se laisser déranger par les importuns. Il n'est pas dans mon habitude de louer des films avant de les avoir vus, mais le sérieux, l'amour que Dreyer a apporté à son travail, lent et méthodique me portent à espérer beaucoup de ce film. Le scénario retrace la dernière journée de la vie de Jeanne d'Arc, et sa mort. Il se passe tout entier en 24 heures, commence par le dernier interrogatoire que les juges font passer à Jeanne dans la chapelle et se termine par la mort sur le bûcher. Il n'y aura pas de grands décors, de grandes reconstitutions. Dreyer a voulu faire une chose directement humaine dans laquelle le cœur soit pris et broyé, comme si l'on assistait, par indiscretion, à une chose à laquelle on n'a pas le droit d'assister.

MARC ALLÉGRET.

COMMENT AND REVIEW

An interesting point in connection with last month's editorial, which, it will be remembered, dealt with the dangerous and destructive manner in which health films are nearly always made, and their harmful effect upon the mind, occurred

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recently at Leeds, where the Ufa film *Dangers of Ignorance* was shown. The Kinematograph Weekly reports "A full nursing staff is on duty and was kept busy. At one evening show 37 men fainted."

This would be bad enough if the film were accurate, and one might reasonably expect it to be scrapped immediately. But not only is the film inaccurate and misrepresentative, but when the realisation of its shocking effect upon the mind and spirit is so far recognised as to equip the theatre with a full nursing staff, one is left speechless before the awful sub-normality which can possibly suppose that such treatment can possibly do any good anywhere. Let it again be suggested that the idea of a health film is excellent, but that the way to do it is not to show the destructive course of the disease, but the constructive *cure*; not to show diagrammatically, photographically and with ghastly human examples the breaking down of tissue, and the horrible progress of the disease germs, but the routing of the disease, and the general cleansing wrought by cure. Meanwhile this pernicious film is attracting thousands, and where its harm will end, goodness only knows.



Potemkin was shown privately in London in May to the London and Middlesex County Councils. Although none of the members would make any statement after having seen it, it was announced that they would report to their committees at the Council meetings. Up to the time of writing there has

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been no mention of it. Why was *Potemkin* shown? It is the beginning of a movement to negotiate with Russia, and to recognise its films? We have already had the somewhat innocuous *Postmaster*. *Potemkin* might be shown, or shorn, but it is certain England will not see it in its original form.



On the other hand, Arthur Hammerstein has taken back to New York Eisenstein's later picture *Ten Days that Shook the World*. In addition to this he has Pudowkin's *Mother* and *the End of St. Petersburg*. Mr. Hammerstein plans to show these and even in case of controversy he can show them in his own New York theatre.

Ten Days was recently forbidden in Zurich, after its first public showing, on the grounds of being too favourable to Bolshevik régime!



Robert Florey, whose remarkable hundred-dollar films are discussed elsewhere in this issue, is not a new-comer to the screen. His first cinema work was in Switzerland, making two reel comedies of the Charlie Chaplin type. In Europe he also directed pictures for Gaumont (Louis Feuillade Pictures)—in Nice—and for Pathe (L. Boudrioz Co.) in Paris. He met Douglas Fairbanks in Switzerland, and came to Hollywood, where he directed in pictures for several of the minor companies,

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and worked as an assistant director with some of the larger companies, under King Vidor, Henry King, von Stroheim, and others. He is now assisting King in the filming of *The Woman Disputed*, starring Norma Talmadge. For two years, also, he was technical director for the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Company, where he designed sets and costumes for *La Boheme*, *Bardelys the Magnificent*, and other big productions. He has also written several books on motion pictures.

He is, of course, the author of his unique experimental films, as well as the director of them. The stories are extremely slight, insubstantial and fantastic. Their importance and distinguishing quality lie in the manner in which they have been taken. For the *Hollywood Rhapsody* only one lamp was used. Last month it was stated that this was a forty watt lamp. This was a typographical error, and should have been four hundred watt. This, however, in no way affects the marvel of what he has accomplished with this single light. The film was inspired by Gerschwin's musical composition *The Rhapsody in Blue*, and as elsewhere stated, was produced at a cost of ninety-seven dollars. His second, *The Sad Love of Zero* (a fantastic portrayal of a chemist's romance) involved a cash expenditure of one hundred and twenty five dollars. And his third *Johann the Coffin Maker* a graveyard fantasy, will be made for approximately the same sum. All of the work on his pictures is done at night, after he is finished with his daily duties at the United Artists studio.

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Hollywood now has its equivalent of the *Studio des Ursulines*, the *Filmarte*, designed for the showing of unusual and experimental films. Miss Regge Doran is the promoter and manager of it, backed by an organisation representing a group of high-class Hollywood movie theatres. It is devoted to the showing of European as well as Hollywood films that are distinguished by novelty or exceptional artistry. Its programmes will include the reviving of old films. Further notice of this theatre and its policy will appear in the June issue.



The following letter has just been received from Mr Le Neve Foster, and will be of great interest in its bearing upon the articles by Mr Macpherson and Bryher in this issue.

There has been such a lot in the last two issues of *Close Up* which I would like to write to you about that I hardly know where to begin.

In your April issue one writer says that he thinks producers would be afraid to fade out and then cut to the next scene. I did this very thing in *The Wizard of Alderley Edge* which we made here last summer. The effect was, contrary to expectations, practically no different from a fade out and then a fade in. The converse of this procedure (i. e. a sudden blackout and then a fade in) is rather effective in certain circumstances.

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Miss Tonge and I tried another effect (which I have not seen done) a short time ago. It is rather like a mix, but instead of fading out, we circled out and circled in, overlapping the two "circles" instead of the fades. I have only just finished the developing of this bit of film and have not had time to run off print yet, so I can't say how it will look on the screen, which is of course, the real test (*).

I am very interested in Bryher's remarks on film societies and would suggest that promoters of these schemes take a look round the second hand projector market. A few months ago I picked up a machine (complete with motor, spool-boxes and stand) for £12. It is listed by the makers at £45. So far, the only thing I have had to do to it, is to renew the brushes of the motor.

The real difficulty which the would be film society has to face seems to me to be, not finding projectors or films, but finding a home. Rooms, especially ones where one can put up a private theatre, are jolly difficult to find—and the rent and rates are a big liability for a small new unit to undertake.

I do feel very strongly that EVERY film society should try to PRODUCE one film a year. No matter if it is only a few hundred feet, it will make its producers far more intelligently critical than they were before. And such a film should REALLY be produced by the *film society*. Not by a few members helped out by an "imported" professional cameraman. It is not often possible (on the score of expense) for amateurs to under-

(*) This was also effectively employed in *Sühne*.

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take their own laboratory work, but everything else and even this when possible ought to be undertaken by the Society. Though 9m.m. and 16 m.m. films are better experience than none at all, for obvious reasons it is desirable that all serious work should be done with standard 35 m.m. film.

Yours sincerely,

PETER A. LE NEVE FOSTER.

Hon. Secretary

The Manchester Film Society.

★

170, Hope Street, Glasgow. C. 2.

May I permit myself the benefit of your pages to suggest that if any readers are interested in forming a Film Club in Glasgow that I will be pleased to hear from them and arrange a meeting, whereby the matter might be discussed. Myself and another friend would be pleased to form the nucleus, and perhaps Bryher; will offer the practical suggestions via the editorial pages.

Yours very truly.

A. McLEOD BISSET.

Engineer.

★

Dr. Fritz Wenhausen, director of the very lovely *Out of the Mist (Hagar's Sohn)* is now directing a new Terra Film, *Eine*

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Frau von Format, of which the manuscript was written by himself and Heinz Goldberg, from an Operette by Schanzer and Wehlisch, with music by Michael Krauzs. Mady Christians is in the leading role. Diana Karenne recently in *Casanova* is in the role of Princess Petra. Other players include Hedwig Wangel, Peter C. Leska, Hans Thimig, Emil Heyse and Robert Garrison. Sets by Hans Jacoby, costumes by Theatrekunst Kaufmann, and photography by Arpad Viragh.

Ludwig Berger will direct Mady Christians in a film written by Hans Müller, entitled *Das brennende Herz*, which will be started in the summer. Terra will distribute this film in Germany. A further item of interest concerning Terra Films is the making of *Revolutionshochzeit*, from the stage success by Sophus Michaelis, directed by A. W. Sandberg, with Suzy Vernon and Gosta Erkmann.



Max. Glass Productions will film *Unfug der Liebe*, from the book by Alexander Gastell. Robert Wiene will direct. Two of his best known films to date are *Rosenkavalier* and *the Hands of Orlac*.



The Marquis d'Eon, Carl Grune's new film now being made for Emelka, is being photographed by that great artist of the camera, Fritz Arno Wagner, who has to his credit *Warning Shadows*, *Jeanne Ney*, and *Spione (The Spy)*. This, apart from

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anything else, will ensure our interest from the start. Liane Haid will play the title role. Agnes Esterhazy will play Madame Pompadour, and Mona Maris the Russian Czarina.



Der Negerspielfilm "Samba" volksbildend jugendfrei.

In Senegambien, im Südafrikanischen Urwald, hat die bekannte Grothe-Brückner-Expedition der Emelka einen Film gedreht der sich durch seine absolute Neuartigkeit von allem unterscheidet, was wir bisher auf der Leinwand gesehen haben. Samba ist ein Spielfilm, kein Kulturfilm und seine Schauspieler sind die schöngewachsenen Bambaraneger Senegambiens, die selbst noch nie einen Film gesehen haben und doch durch die naturliche Anmut ihrer Bewegungen und ihre mimische Ausdrucksfähigkeit den Film für uns Europäer zu einem Erlebnis machen. Die Hauptgestalten sind Samba, der grösste Jäger des Urwalds und Fatu seine Liebste.

Und um die Liebe dieser Beiden spielt sich das Drama eines ganzen Negerdorfes ab, das uns in Spannung hält. Und ganz wie bei uns spielen Reichtum und Macht ihre gewichtige und besondere Rolle dabei. Der Film wurde für das ganze Reich für die Jugend freigegeben und als volksbildend erklärt.

HOLLYWOOD NOTES

Hollywood is again abuzz with activity. After a protracted period of depression, during which several of the larger studios were closed, the business of picture making has been resumed in full measure and with increased fervor and optimism. No large proportion of Hollywood's twenty-five studios and sixty or more producing companies could ever long remain idle or mark time. The world-wide demand for Hollywood films continues to multiply, notwithstanding foreign quota laws and increasing European competition.

The popularity of the phono-film has proven so emphatic, that every producer is preparing to use this new sound device with its feature pictures. Warner Brothers and the Fox Company, as the pioneers in this field, already have several speaking and singing films on the market. FBO has entered into an arrangement with the General Electric Company and the Radio Corporation of America for the use of photo-phone inventions in the making and exhibiting of its pictures. Paramount Lasky is experimenting in the same field, and has already equipped two of its special films, *Wings* and *The Legion of The Condemned*, with realistic sound effects in connection with the whirring of airplanes and the roaring of their motors.

However, it will probably be some time before any but the

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largest cinemas will be in a position to exhibit this novel and impressive innovation, as special theatre equipment is necessary for its use, and this is both intricate and expensive.

Another new device in connection with picture showing, is the magnascope. By means of this invention the size of the screen and the projected scenes can be increased four-fold at any desired point in the running of the film. It is especially effective in such scenes as embrace an extended sweep of landscape or sea view. It was first used in the exhibiting of *Old Ironsides*, and is now being employed in the showing of *Wings* and one or two other recent pictures of like character in which certain wide-ranging camera shots admit of a larger canvas and thereby attain a heightened effect of realism.

Still another new cinema invention has recently been perfected and put into operation. This, however, is purely a professional one and has no connection with the mechanics of making or exhibiting a picture. It is a laugh-recording device, employing certain principles of the radio, and is used by directors and film editors of comedies for the purpose of recording the laugh reactions of an audience when a comedy film before being released is given a try-out preview at some local theatre. Heretofore the best that could be done by personal observation at such a preview, was to keep account of the number of laughs provoked by the picture, without being definitely able, however, to record all of the particular points at which the audience laughed or were expected to laugh and failed to do so ; nor was

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it possible to keep accurate account of the various degrees of the audience's response to the different "gags" and smart titles. Now however, by means of this electro-mechanical device, all of these audience reactions—from dull silence or individual giggles to uproarious outbursts of mirth—can be accurately recorded, together with the specific points in the film at which they occur, and thus be made to serve as a guide for such further editing or for such changes in the film as they may indicate as necessary before the picture is released for general distribution.

C. H.

ENGLISH RELEASES

Several movies to be shown in June are worth seeing ; there are also a number of good films which could be seen, if people would have the energy to demand them with insistence. The names of these have been included so that people can ask for them.

At the Edge of the World.

Ufa film, directed by Karl Grune. The sort of not quite first-rate picture that is hailed as a masterpiece by the press Brigitte Helm is excellent, and the film is decidedly to be seen. See stills in *Close Up* for February. Distributed by Gaumont.

The Fugitive Lover.

Hans Steuwe (*Schinderannes, Feme*) in his first film to be shown in England. Directed by Richard Oswald. Distributed by New Era.

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Berlin.

Ruttman's "symphony of a modern city" was shown at the Capitol in April, so it must be in England, and therefore available.

Love and Thieves.

Ufa film, directed by Karl Fröhlich. Henny Porten in a dual role. This should be enough. Distributed by Gaumont.

Movietone.

The latest programmes at the New Gallery include Beatrice Lillie and Campbell breaking the world's speed record. Fox.

Shiraz.

A film acted entirely by Indians, around the Taj Mahal. Directed by Victor Peers, distributed by British International. Just arrived.

The Unsleeping Eye.

A film made in New Guinea by Alexander Macdonald, explorer. British Screen Productions.

Verdun.

This French war film, though stressing "realism", shows a care for composition not usually evident in pictures of this type. To be released during the summer by Gaumont.

La passion de Jeanne d'Arc.

Dreyer's work, stills of which appeared last month in *Close Up* has been bought for England by Whitehall Films.

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Speedy.

Harold Lloyd's newest, and excellent Lloyd. Photography would make it be called a work of art were it slower and more pretentious.

Wings.

Has points, which are not its story, its sentiment, its horrors nor its cast, which is frail on the feminine (Clara Bow and Jobyna Ralston) and overstocked on the adolescent (Richard Arlen and Charles Rogers). Photography of aerial fights, and "how was it done?" its interest. Also, as showing the kind of thing that runs a year in New York. Paramount.

Shooting Stars.

Of which everyone knows. British Instructional film.

FILMS RECOMMENDED BY CLOSE UP

FIRST CHOICE.

Die Liebe der Jeanne Ney (The Love of Jeanne Ney).

Ufa. Direction : G. W. Pabst. Manuscript : Leonhardt. Cameraman : F. A. Wagner. Edith Jehanne, Brigitte Helm, Fritz Rasp. Uno Henning, A. E. Licho, Vladimir Sokoloff, in exquisite Pabst scenario. Superb technique acting, photography. Set in Crimea and Montparnasse. To be seen at all costs. (English release Dec. 31). Recently at the Avenue Pavilion, London.

SUCCESS
to
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F.W. MURNAU

"FAUST"

"SUNRISE"

"THE LAST LAUGH"

"THE FOUR DEVILS"

Sühne (Expiation) Dura Lex.

Early Sovkino Film by L. Kuleschow (see articles by H. D.) from Jack London story. A Chochlowa as Edith has almost terrible genius. Fred Forell as Jack. S. Komarow, P. Podabed, P. Goladschew.

Abwege (Crise).

Erde Film, distributed by Deutsche-Universal. New Film by G. W. Pabst, with Brigitte Helm, and Herta v. Walter, Jack Trevor, Gustav Diessl, Fritz Odemar. Further laurels to this great director. Paris premiere shortly under management of Ste. Sofar.

Dona Juana.

Ufa in conjunction with Elizabeth Bergner's Poetic Film Company. Direction Paul Czinner. Photography by Carl Freund. From the Spanish of Tirzo da Molina. Elizabeth Bergner. Walter Rilla.

Bed and Sofa (Trois dans un Sous-Sol).

Sud film A. G. Ludmila Semenova, Woldemar Fogel and Nicoletta Batajoff. The *Potemkin* method applied to domestic drama. Amazing psychology. Uncompromising treatment. Directed by Alexander Room.

The End of St. Petersburg.

Another triumph for Pudowkin, maker of *The Mother*. Meshrabpom-Russ. Film, for Derussa. Mss. Natan Zarchi. Photography : Anatolij Golownia. Sets : Koslowski. Played by Baranowskaia, W. Oblensky, as Ledebeff. J. Tschuwileff and Tschistiakoff.

The Mother.

From the story Maxim Gorki. Meshrabpom-Russ-Production. Direc-

Best wishes to Close Up!

PAUL LENI

"The Cabinet of Waxworks"

"The Cat and the Canary"

"The Man who Laughs"

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tion W. Pudowkin. The mother : W. Baranowskajas. The father : Leinstiakoff. The son : Nicolei Bataloff. No reason for censorship as its lesson is far greater than merely political.

The Black Sunday.

Production Goskino. Direction Wiskowski. A second *Potemkin*, continuing the story of the 1905 revolution. If possible more realistic in treatment than *Potemkin*, though less masterly in appeal.

The Postmaster.

Meshrabpom-Russ-Production. From the novel by Pouschkin. Directed by Jeliabouiski and Moskvine, with Moskvine in the leading role and, Tamarine and M^{me} Malinowskaja. Dynamic beauty with typical Russian quality of realism.

Geiger von Florenz (Impetuous Youth).

Ufa. Direction Paul Czinner. Elizabeth Bergner, Conrad Veidt, Walter Rilla. Photography by Freund. Not to be missed.

Voyage to the Congo.

Neofilm production. A photographic record by Marc Allégret of the journey made by André Gide and himself to unknown regions of the Congo, as told by Gide in his book of the same name. Vivid and unique.

Schinderhannes.

Prometheus-Film-super-production. Direction Kurt Bernhardt. Scenario by same with Carl Zuckmayer. Photography Gunther Krampf. Sets by Heinrich Richter. Superb cast including Hans Stüwe, Fritz Rasp, Lissi Arna, Frieda Richard, Albert Steinruck, Kowal-Samborski.

Best wishes to Close Up!

ERNST LUBITSCH

"Danton"

"Madame du Barry"

"Forbidden Paradise"

"Lady Windemere's Fan"

"The Marriage Circle"

"So This is Paris"

CLOSE UP

Rien que les Heures and En Rade.

Neofilm productions directed by A. Cavalcanti. Catherine Hessling starred.

La Tragédie de la Rue.

Pantomin-Film. Directed by Bruno-Rahn. Photography : Guido Seeber. Asta Nielsen in wonderful role. Oscar Homolka, Hilda Jennings, W. Pittchaw. Marvellous psychological treatment, from the book by William Braun. Presented in France by M. B. Film.

L'Auberge en Folie (Kleinstadtsünder).

Bruno Rahn's film turned out just previous to *La Tragédie de la Rue*. Asta Nielsen, Maria-Paudler, Hans Wassmann, Max Maximilian, Hermann Picha. Pantomin-Film, presented in France by M. B. Film.

Der Meister von Nurnberg.

Phœbus-Film. Directed by Ludwig Berger. Beautiful scenes and lighting. Frohlich gives charming performance. Maria Solveg brings new grace to the screen.

10 Tage die die Welt Erschütterten (Ten Days that Staggered the World).

New Film by S. M. Eisenstein, maker of *Potemkin*. Production : Sovkino. Distributed by Prometheus Film in Germany. Said to have been much cut at last minute. Marvellous treatment, but disappointed many critics.

Samba.

Emelka Film by A. Bruckner. With native actors of S. Africa only.

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Berlin (A City Symphony).

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Die Abenteuer eines Zehnmarkscheines (Adventures of a Ten-mark Note).

Fox-Europa Production. Directed by Viertel. With Werner Fuetterer, Anna Meiller, Imogen Roberston and Walter Frank.

La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc.

Soc. Générale de Films Production. Dist. A. C. E. Carl Dreyer's astounding masterpiece. Scenario, Dreyer and Joseph Delteil. Cameraman, Rudolph Maté, M^{lle} Falconetti as Jehanne. Silvain as Cauchon.

Moscow that laughs and Weeps (Moscow wie es wient und lacht).

Meschrabpom-Russ for Derussa. Direction Barnett. Anna Sten, J. Kowal-Sambourski, Woldemar Fogel.

SECOND CHOICE.

Kopf Hoch Charley (Bigamie).

Ufa. Ellen Richter in marvellous role. Directed by Willi Wolff. Last third of picture falls off.

Moral.

Matador-Film-Verleih. (Universa^l Pictures Corporation). Ellen Rich-

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ter and Harry Halm in bright and charming comedy. Directed by Willi Wolf.

Out of the Mist (Hagar's Sohn).

Defu Production. Mady Christians. Werner Fuetterer, Vladimir Sokoloff in drama of German mountains. Beautiful lighting. Directed by Fritz Wendhausen.

Alraune (Mandrake).

Ama Film. From the book by Hanns Heinz Ewers, directed by Henrik Galeen. Fantastic fare for those who like the improbable. Brigitte Helm in title role. Paul Wegener, Ivan Petrovitch, Valeska Gert, Wolfgang Zilzer.

Am Rande der Welt (The Edge of the World).

Ufa. Directed by Carl Grune. Sets by Neppach. Brigitte Helm. Albert Steinruck. Plea for pacifism. Fails in this respect, but has beautiful sets and lighting.

White Gold.

De Mille production, directed by William K. Howard. Jetta Goudal, George Bancroft. Admirable restraint in tragic story. Bad comedy touches.

Wolf's Clothing (La Folle Nuit).

A delightful Lubitsch comedy with Monty Blue and Patsy Ruth Miller. Directed by Roy del Ruth.

So This is Paris !

Lubitsch again, with Monte Blue, Patsy Ruth Miller, and Andre Beranger.

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Lubitsch again reveals his deft and charming power. Ramon Novarro and Norma Shearer.

The King of Kings.

Cecil M. de Mille production. W. B. Warner, Jacqueline Logan. Ernest Torrence, Rudolph and Joseph Schildkraut, Victor Varconi, Wm Boyd.

Sunrise.

Fox Film. Directed by Murnau. Janet Gaynor, Eugene O'Brien.

Luther.

A Cob- Film Production made for the Lutheran Church by Hans Kyser. Has created much dissent among the Roman Catholics. Eugen Klopfer as Luther. Livio Pavanelli and Elsa Wagner.

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